THE MYSTERY OF EASTER ISLAND

805

THE STORY OF AN EXPEDITION

BY

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"WITH A PREHISTORIC PEOPLE: THE AKIKUYU OF BRITISH EAST AFRICA"

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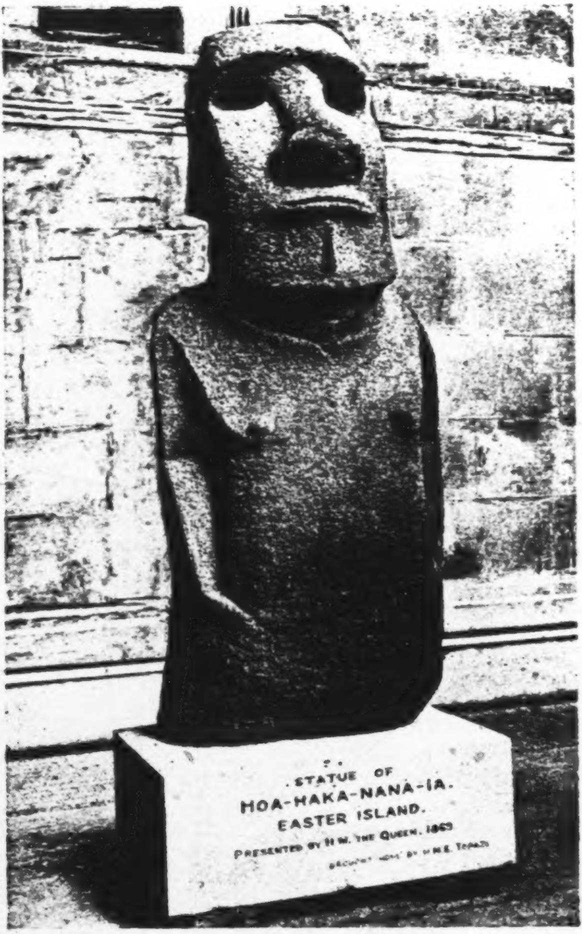
[Title Page]

FIG. 31.


STATUE OF
HOA-HAKA-NANA-IA.
EASTER ISLAND.
PRESENTED BY H.M. THE QUEEN. 1869
BROUGHT HOME BY H.M.S. TOPAZE

STATUE AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.
For back of statue see fig. 106.

[facing p. 165]

[pp. 1-164 not processed]

CHAPTER XIII

PREHISTORIC REMAINS

AHU OR BURIAL-PLACES

Form of the Easter Island Image—Position and Number of the Ahu—Design and Construction of the Image Ahu—Reconstruction and Transformation—The Semi-pyramid Ahu—The Overthrow of the Images and Destruction of the Ahu.

In many places it is possible in the light of great monuments, 172
to reconstruct the past. In Easter Island the past is the present,
it is impossible to escape from it; the inhabitants of to-day are 814
less real than the men who have gone; the shadows of the departed builders still possess the land. Voluntarily or involuntarily the sojourner must hold commune with those old workers; for the whole air vibrates with a vast purpose and energy which has been and is no more. What was it? Why was it? The great works are now in ruins, of many comparatively little remains; but the impression infinitely exceeded anything which had been anticipated, and every day, as the power to see increased, brought with it a greater sense of wonder and marvel. "If we were to tell people at home these things," said our Sailing-master, after being shown the prostrate images on the great burial place of Tongariki, "they would not believe us."

The present natives take little interest in the remains. The statues are to them facts of every-day life in much the same way as stones or banana-trees. "Have you no *moai*" (as they are termed) "in England?" was asked by one boy, in a tone in which surprise was slightly mingled with contempt; to ask for the history of the great works is as successful as to try to get from an old woman selling bootlaces at Westminster the story of Cromwell or of the frock-coated worthies in Parliament Square. The information given in reply to questions is generally wildly mythical, and any real knowledge crops up only indirectly.

172 Anyone who is able to go to the British Museum can see a typical specimen of an Easter Island statue, in the large image which greets the approaching visitor from under the portico (fig. 31). The general form is unvarying, and with one exception, which will be alluded to hereafter, all appear to be the work of skilled hands, which suggests that the design was well known and evolved under other conditions. It represents a half-length figure, at the bottom of which the hands nearly meet in front of the body. The most remarkable features are the ears, of which the lobe is depicted to represent a fleshy rope (fig. 58), while in a few cases the disc which was worn in it is also indicated (fig. 59). The fashion of piercing and distending the lobe of the ear is found among various primitive races.[1] The tallest statues are over 30 feet, a few are only 6 feet, and even smaller specimens exist. Those which stood on the burial-places, now to be described, are usually from 12 to 20 feet in height, and were surmounted with a form of hat.[2]

764 *Position and Number of Ahu.*—In Easter Island the problem of the disposal of the dead was solved by neither earth-burial nor cremation, but by means of the omnipresent stones which were built up to make a last resting-place for the departed. Such burial-places are known as "ahu," and the name will henceforth be used, for it signifies a definite thing, or rather type of thing, for which we have no equivalent. They number in all some two hundred and sixty, and are principally found near the coast, but some thirty exist inland, sufficient to show that their erection on the sea-board was a matter of convenience, not of principle. With the exception of the great eastern and
[368] western headlands, where they are scarce, it is probably safe to say that, in riding round the island, it is impossible to go anywhere for more than a few hundred yards without coming across one of these abodes of the dead. They cluster most thickly on the little coves and their enclosing promontories, which were the principal centres of population. Some are two or three hundred yards away from the edge of the cliff, others stand on the verge; in the lower land they are but little above the sea-level, while on the precipitous part of the coast the ocean breaks hundreds of feet below.

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[1] For an illustrated description of the method of expanding the ear, see *With a Prehistoric People, the Akikuyu of British East Africa*, p. 32.

[2] A full description of the statues is given in chap. xiv.

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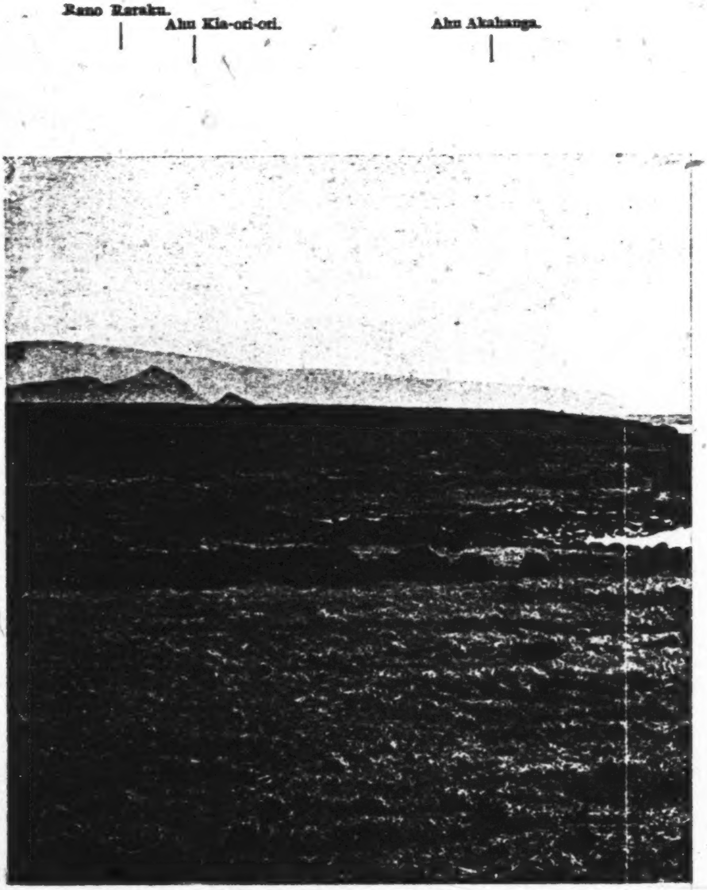
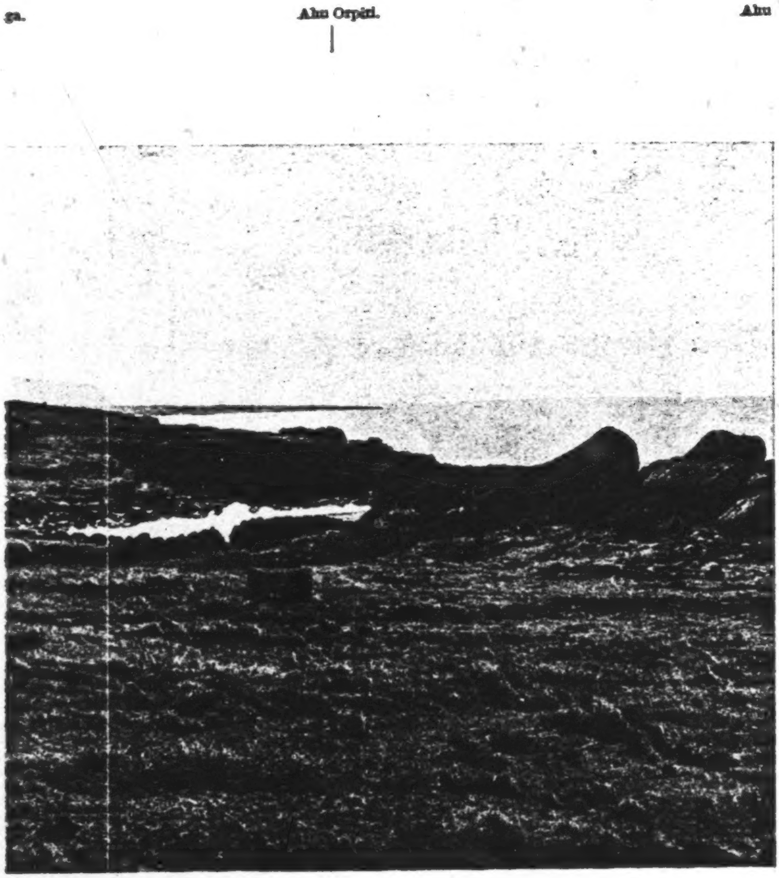

Rano Raraku.
Ahu Kia-ori-ori.
Ahu Akahanga.

[facing p. 166-A(a)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

133
764


ga.
Ahu Orpiri.
Ahu

AKAHANGA COVE AND NEIGHBOU

[facing p. 166 - A (b)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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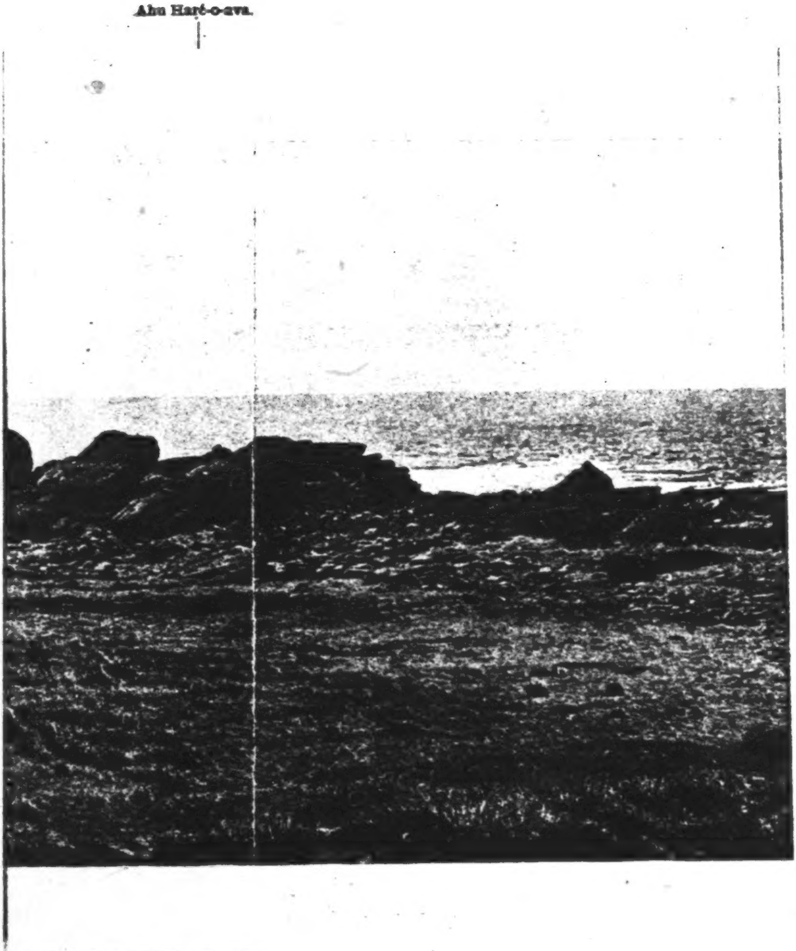
Ahu Haré-o-ava.

VE AND NEIGHBOURING AHU.

[facing p. 166 A(c)]

FIG. 32.

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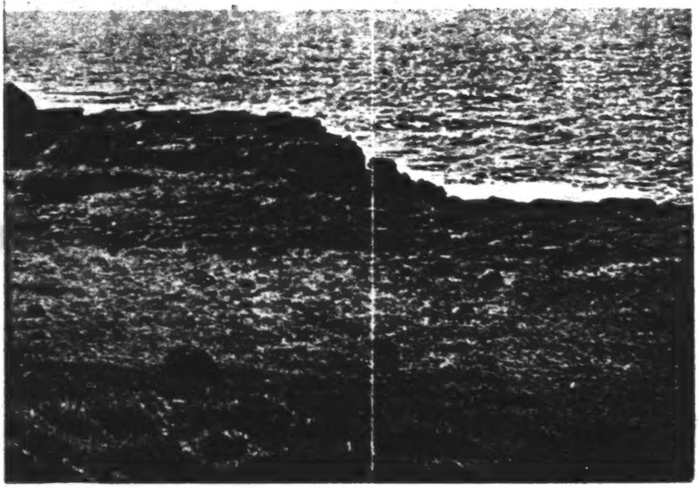

[facing p. 166 - A(d)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

Portion of an image
still standing.

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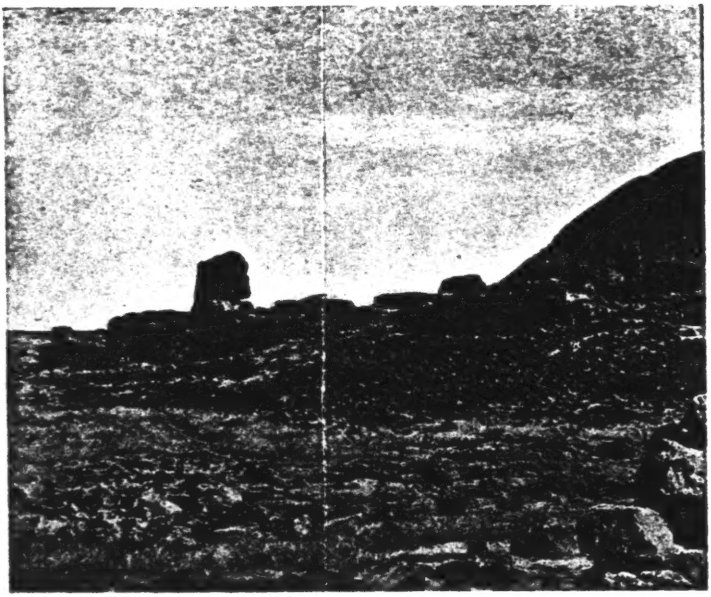

(A modern

166A]

[facing p. 166-B(a)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

Rano Raraku, S.E. face.

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(A modern wall.)

AHU TONGARIKI, SEAWARD SI

[facing p. 166-B (b)]

Bases of fallen images.

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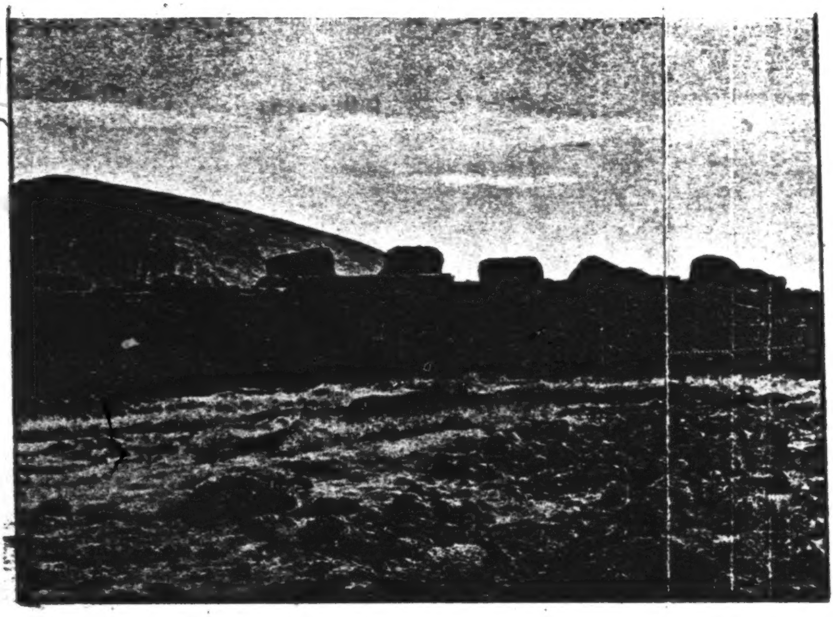

GARIKI, SEAWARD SIDE.

[facing p. 166-B(c)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 33.

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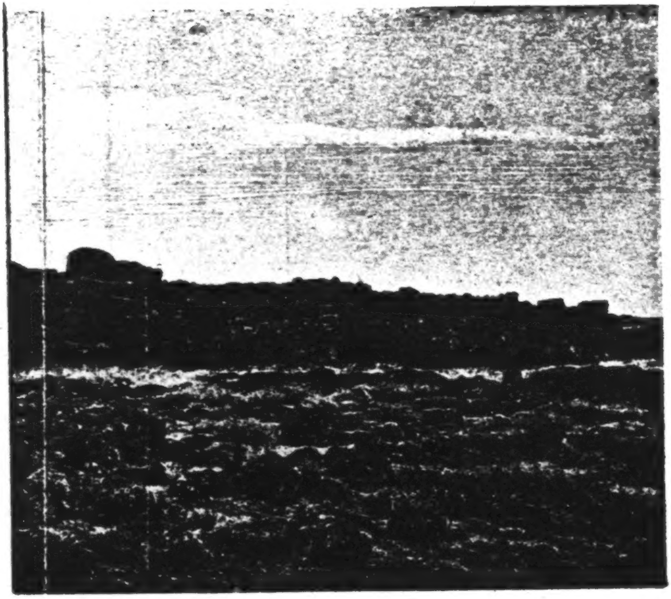

[facing p. 166-B(d)]

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Head on its back.

166B]

[Facing p. 166 — C(a)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

133
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Head on its back. Body of statue on its front.

AHU TONGARIKI, LANDWARD

With fifteen fallen statues.

[facing p. 166 - C(b)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919

OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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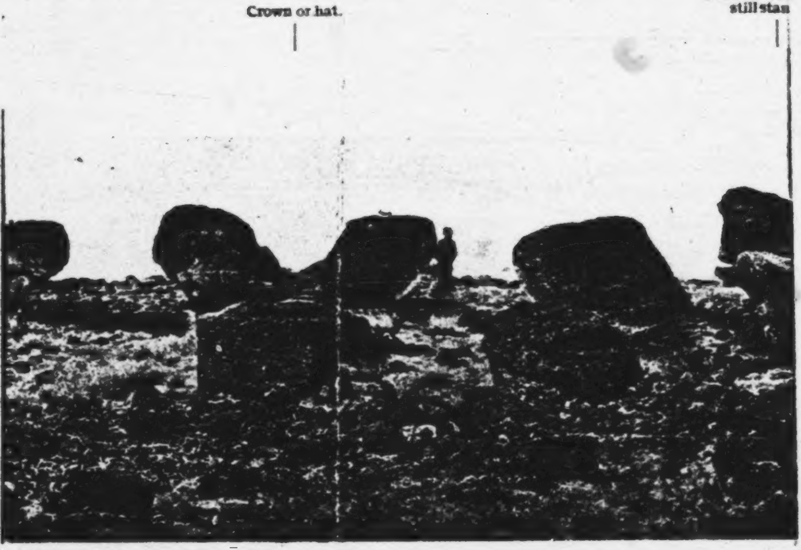
Crown or hat.
Portion of a
still stan

NGARIKI, LANDWARD SIDE.

h fifteen fallen statues.

[facing p. 166-C(c)]

133
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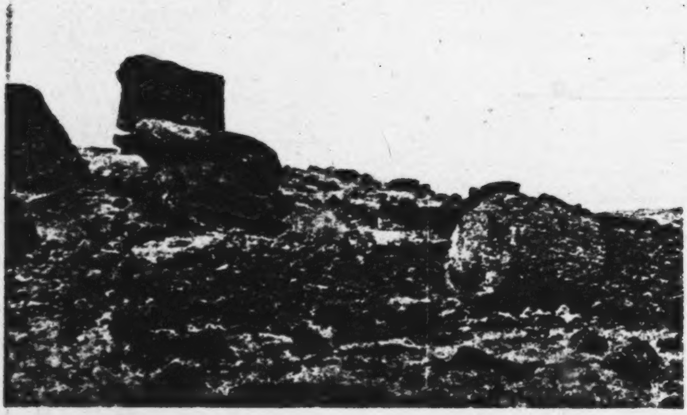
FIG. 34.


Portion of an image still standing.
Crown or hat.

For distant view, see fig. 73.

[facing p. 166-C(d)]

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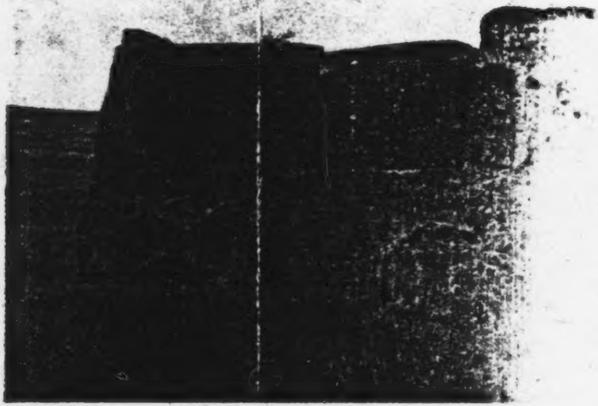
764



[facing p. 166-D (a)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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Central portion.

AHU VINAPU.

[facing p. 166-D (b)]

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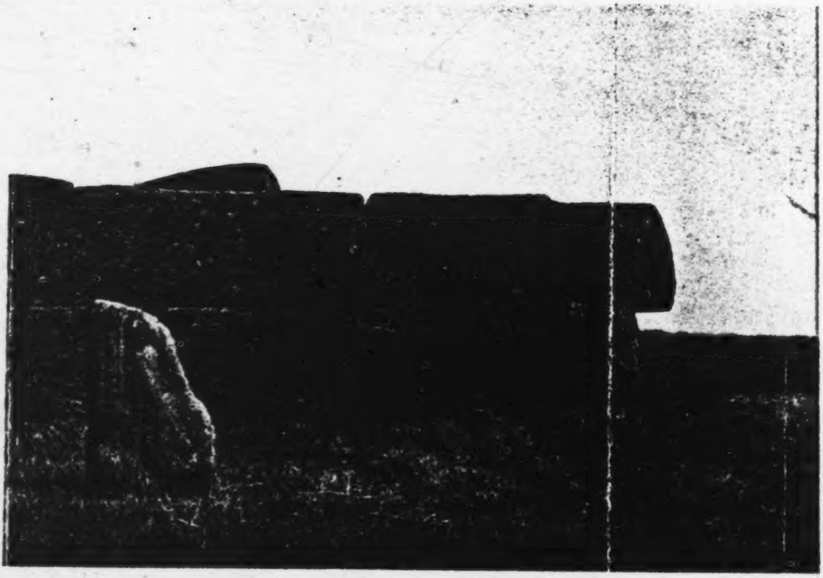

Wir

AHU VINAPU.

[facing p. 166 – D (c)]

172
764

FIG. 35

Wing.

[facing p. 156 - D (d)]

It was these burial-places, on which the images were then 532
standing, which so strongly impressed the early voyagers and 764
whose age and origin have remained an unsolved problem.

During the whole of our time on the island we worked on 126
the ahu as way opened. Those which happened to lie near to either of our camps were naturally easy of access, but to reach the more distant ones, notably those on the north shore, involved a long expedition. Such a day began with perhaps an hour's ride; at noon there was an interval for luncheon, when, in hot weather, the neighbourhood was scoured for miles to find the smallest atom of shade; and the day ended with a journey home of not less than two hours, during which an anxious eye was kept on the sinking sun. The usual method, as each ahu was reached, was for S. to dismount, measure it and describe it, while I sat on my pony and scribbled down notes; but in some manner or other every part of the coast was by one or both of us ridden over several times, and a written statement made of the size, kind, condition, and name of each monument.

Unfortunately there is in existence no large-scale plan of the 102
coast, a need we had to supply as best we could; map of Easter 126
Island there is none, only the crude chart; the efforts of our own surveyor were limited, by the time at his disposal, to making detailed plans of a few of the principal spots. The want is to be regretted geographically, but it does not materially affect the archæological result. We were always accompanied by native 115
guides in order to learn local names and traditions, and it was soon found necessary to make a point of these being old men; owing to the concentration of the remains of the population in one district, all names elsewhere, except those of the most important places, are speedily being forgotten. The memories of even the older men were sometimes shaky, and to get reasonably complete and accurate information the whole of a district had, in more than one case, to be gone over again with a second ancient who turned out to have lived in the neighbourhood in his youth and hence to be a better authority.

Original Design and Construction of Image Ahu.—The burial- 764
places are not all of one type, nor all constructed to carry statues; 532
some also are known to have been built comparatively recently, and will therefore be described under a later section. The image ahu are, however, all prehistoric. They number just

764 under a hundred, or over one-third of the whole.[1] The figures 532 connected with them, of which traces still remain, were counted as 231, but as many are in fragments, this number is uncertain.

A typical image ahu (fig. 36) is composed of a long wall running 764 parallel with the sea, which, in a large specimen, is as much as 532 15 feet in height and 300 feet in length; it is buttressed on the land side with a great slope of masonry. The wall is in three 333 divisions. The main or central portion projects in the form of a terrace on which the images stood, with their backs to the sea; it is therefore broad enough to carry their oval bed-plates; these measure up to about 10 feet in length by 8 feet or 9 feet in width, and are flush with the top of the wall. On the great ahu of Tongariki there have been fifteen statues, but sometimes an ahu has carried one figure only.

The wall which forms the landward side of the terrace is 764 continued on either hand in a straight line, thus adding a 333 wing at each end of the central portion which stands somewhat farther back from the sea (fig. 41). Images were sometimes placed on the wings, but it was not usual. From this continuous wall the masonry slopes steeply till it reaches a containing wall, some 3 feet high, formed of finely wrought slabs of great size and of peculiar shape; the workmanship put into this wall is usually the most highly finished of any part of the ahu. Extending inland from the foot of this low wall is a large, raised, and smoothly paved expanse. The upper surface of this, too, has an appreciable fall, or slope, inland, though it is almost horizontal, when compared with the glacis.

By the method of construction of this area, vault accommodation is obtained between its surface pavement and the sheet of volcanic rock below, on which the whole rests. In the largest specimen the whole slope of masonry, measured that is from either the sea-wall of the wing or from the landward wall of the terrace to its farthest extent, is about 250 feet. Beyond this the ground is sometimes levelled for another 50 or 60 yards, forming a smooth sward which much enhanced the appearance of the ahu. In two cases the ahu is approached by a strip of narrow pavement formed of water-worn boulders laid flat, and bordered with the same kind of stone set on end; one of these

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[1] This excludes some fifteen which may have carried statues, but about which doubt exists.

[p.169]

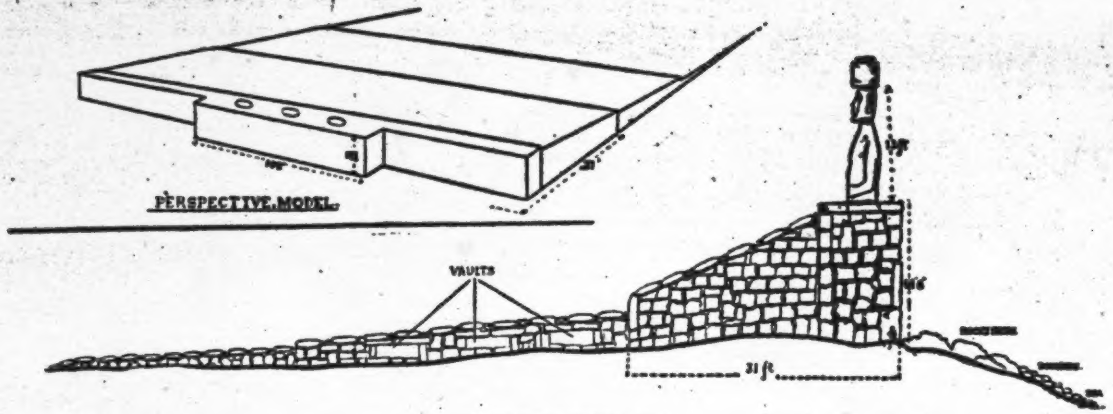
PERSPECTIVE.MODEL.
VAULTS
31 ft

FIG. 36.—DIAGRAM OF IMAGE AHU.

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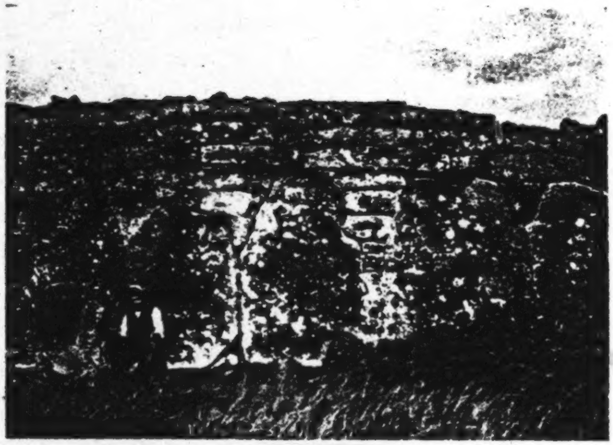
FIG. 37.



AHU TEPEU.

Part of seaward wall showing large slabs—some of the stones forming upper courses are wrought foundation-stones of canoe-shaped houses, pp. 215–16.

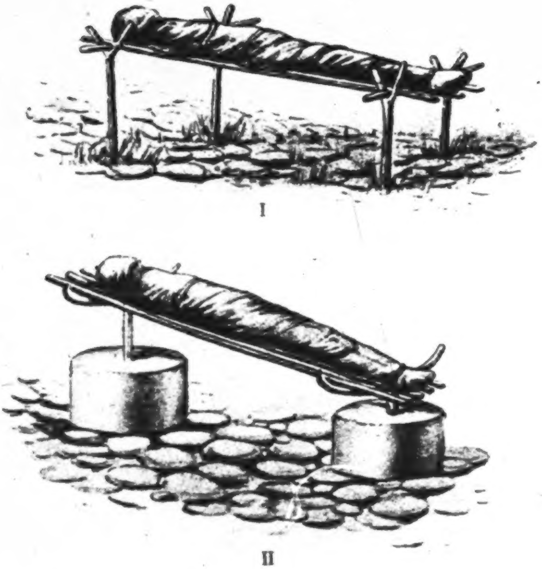
[facing p. 170]

764 pavements is 220 feet in length by 12 feet in width, the other
333 is somewhat smaller (fig. 93).

The general principle on which the sea or main walls are
constructed is usually the same, though the various ahu differ
greatly in appearance: first comes a row of foundation blocks
on which have been set upright the largest stones that could be
found; the upper part of the wall is composed of smaller stones,
and it is finished with a coping. The variety in effect is due to
the difference in material used. In some cases, as at Tongariki
(fig. 33), the most convenient stone available has consisted of
[316] basalt which has cooled in fairly regular cubes, and the rows are
there comparatively uniform in size; in other instances, as at
Ahu Tepeu on the west coast (fig. 37), the handiest material
has been sheets of lava, which have hardened as strata, and
when these have been used the first tier of the wall is composed
of huge slabs up to 9 feet in height. Irregularities in the
shape and size of the big stones are rectified by fitting in small
pieces and surmounting the shorter slabs with additional stones
until the whole is brought to a uniform level; on the top of this
now even tier horizontal blocks are laid, till the whole is the
desired height (fig. 42). The amount of finish put into the work
varies greatly: in many ahu the walls are all constructed of
rough material; in others, while the slabs are untouched, the
stones which bring them to the level and the cubes on the top
are well wrought; in a very few instances, of which Vinapu
(fig. 35) is the best example, the whole is composed of beautifully
finished work. Occasionally, as at Oroi, natural outcrops of
rock have been adapted to carry statues (fig. 122).

764 The study of the ahu is simplified by the fact that they were being used in living memory for the purpose for which they were doubtless originally built. They have been termed "burial-places," but burial in its usual sense was not the only, nor in most cases their principal, object. On death the corpse was wrapped in a tapa blanket and enclosed in its mattress of reeds; fish-hooks, chisels, and other objects were sometimes included. It was then bound into a bundle and carried on staves to the ahu, where it was exposed on an oblong framework. This consisted of four corner uprights set up in the ground, the upper extremities of which were Y-shaped, two transverse bars rested in the bifurcated ends, one at the head, the other at the foot, and

FIG. 38.



METHOD OF EXPOSING THE DEAD FROM ILLUSTRATED DESCRIPTIONS.

[facing p. 171]

on these transverse bars were placed the extremities of the 764 bundle which wrapped the corpse. The description and sketch are based on a model framework, and a wrapped-up figure, one of the wooden images of the island, prepared by the natives to amplify their verbal description.[1] At times, instead of the four supports, two stones were used with a hole in each, into which a 764 Y-shaped stick was placed (fig. 38). While the corpse remained 765 on the ahu the district was marked off by the péra, or taboo, for the dead; no fishing was allowed near, and fires and cooking [784] were forbidden within certain marks—the smoke, at any rate, must be hidden or smothered with grass. Watch was kept by four relatives, and anyone breaking the regulations was liable [689] to be brained. The mourning might last one, two, or even three years, by which time the whole thing had, of course, fallen to pieces. The bones were either left on the ahu, or collected and put into vaults of oblong shape, which were kept for the family, or they might be buried elsewhere. The end of the mourning was celebrated by a great feast, after which ceremony, as one recorder cheerfully concluded, "Pappa was finished."

Looked at from the landward side, we may, therefore, conceive 764 an ahu as a vast theatre stage, of which the floor runs gradually upwards from the footlights. The back of the stage, which is thus the highest part, is occupied by a great terrace, on which are set up in line the giant images, each one well separated from his neighbour, and all facing the spectator. Irrespective of where he stands he will ever see them towering above him, clear cut out against a turquoise sky. In front of them are the remains of the departed. Unseen, on the farther side of the terrace, is the sea. The stone giants, and the faithful dead over whom they watch, are never without music, as countless waves launch their strength against the pebbled shore, showering on the figures a cloud of mist and spray.

Reconstruction and Transformation.—Those which have been 764 described are ideal image ahu, but not one now remains in its 333 original condition. It is by no means unusual to find, even in the oldest parts now existing, that is in walls erected to carry statues, pieces of still older images built into the stonework; in one case a whole statue has been used as a slab for the sea-wall,

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[1] The body was no doubt supported by staves, though they were dispensed with in the model, being unnecessary for the wooden figure.

FIG. 39.

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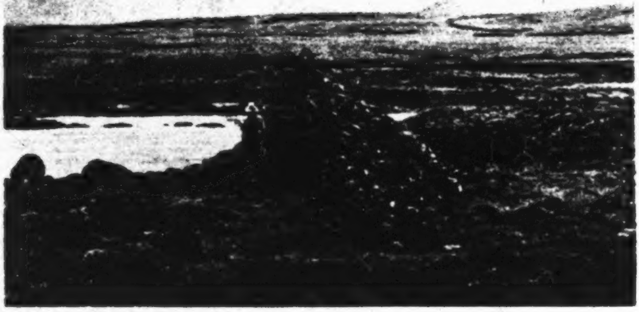

A SEMI-PYRAMID AHU.

FIG. 40.

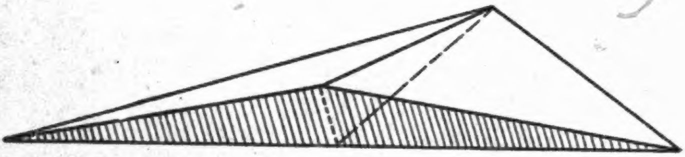

DIAGRAM OF SEMI-PYRAMID AHU.

[facing p. 172]

764 showing that alteration has taken place even when the cult was alive (fig. 42). Again, a considerable number of ahu, some 333 thirteen in all, after being destroyed and terminating their career as image-terraces, have been rebuilt after the fashion of others constructed originally on a different plan (fig. 39). This is a type for which no name was found: it is in form that of a semi-pyramid, and there are between fifty and sixty on the island, in addition to those which have been in the first place image-ahu (fig. 42). A few are comparatively well made, but most are very rough. They resemble a pyramid cut in two, so that the section forms a triangle; this triangle is the sea-wall; the flanking buttress on the land side is made of stones, and is widest at the apex or highest point, gradually diminishing to the angles or extremities. The greatest height, in the centre, varies from about 5 feet to 12 feet, and a large specimen may extend in length from 100 feet to 160 feet. They contain vaults. In a few instances they are ornamented by broken pieces of image-stone, and occasionally by a row of small cairns along the top, which recall the position of the statues on the image-platform; for these no very certain reason was forthcoming, they were varyingly reported to be signs of "péra" or as marking the respective right of families on the ahu. As image-terraces may be found reconstructed as pyramid ahu, the latter form of building must have been carried on longer than the former, and probably till recent times, but there is nothing to show whether or not the earliest specimens of pyramid ahu are contemporary with the great works, or even earlier.

764 *Overthrow of the Images and Destruction of the Ahu.*—The only piece of a statue which still remains on its bed-plate is the fragment already alluded to at Tongariki (fig. 34). In the best-preserved specimens the figures lie on their faces like a row of huge nine-pins; some are intact, but many are broken, the cleavage having generally occurred when the falling image has come in contact with the containing wall at the lower level. The curious way in which the heads have not infrequently turned a somersault while falling and now lie face uppermost is shown in the eighth figure from the western end on Tongariki ahu (fig. 34).

173 No one now living remembers a statue standing on an ahu; and legend, though not of a very impressive character, has

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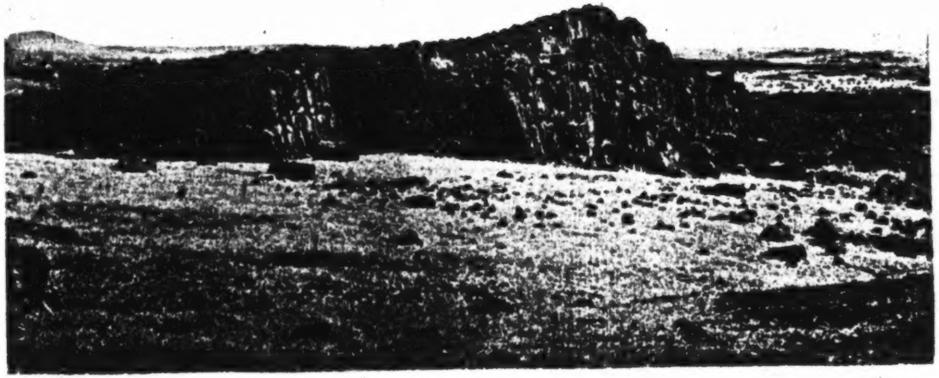
[Facing p. 173]

FIG. 41.



AHU MAHATUA, SEAWARD SIDE

Image ahu, with east wing clearly defined. Landward side and centre converted to semi-pyramid form.

173]

already arisen to account for the fall of some of them. An old man arrived, it is said, in the neighbourhood of Tongariki, and as he was unable to speak, he made known by means of signs that he wished for chicken-heads to eat; these were not forthcoming. He slept, however, in one of the houses there, and during the night his hosts were aroused by a great noise, which he gave it to be understood was made by his feet tapping against the stone foundations of the house. In the morning it was found that the statues on the great ahu had all fallen: it was the revenge of the old man. Such lore is, however, mixed up with more tangible statements to the effect that the figures were overthrown in tribal warfare by means of a rope, or by taking away the small stones from underneath the bed-plates, and thus causing them to fall forward. That the latter method had been used had been concluded independently by studying the remains themselves. It will be seen later, that other statues which have been set up in earth were deliberately dug out, and it seems unnecessary to look, as some have done, to an earthquake to account for their collapse. 173 174

Moreover, the conclusion that the images owed their fall to deliberate vandalism during internecine warfare is confirmed by knowledge, which still survives, connected with the destruction of the last one. This image stood alone on an ahu on the north coast, called Paro, and is the tallest known to have been put up on a terrace, being 32 feet in height. The events occurred just before living memory, and, like most stories in Easter Island, it is connected with cannibalism. A woman of the western clans was eaten by men of the eastern; her son managed to trap thirty of the enemy in a cave and consumed them in revenge; and during the ensuing struggle this image was thrown down (fig. 78). The oldest man living when we were on the island said that he was an infant at the time; and another, a few years younger, stated that his father as a boy helped his grandfather in the fight. It is not, after all, only in Easter Island that pleasure has been taken during war-time in destroying the architectural treasures of the enemy. [538 266]

While, therefore, the date of the erection of the earliest image ahu is lost in the mists of antiquity, nor are we yet in a position to say when the building stopped, we can give approximately the time of the overthrow of the images. We know,

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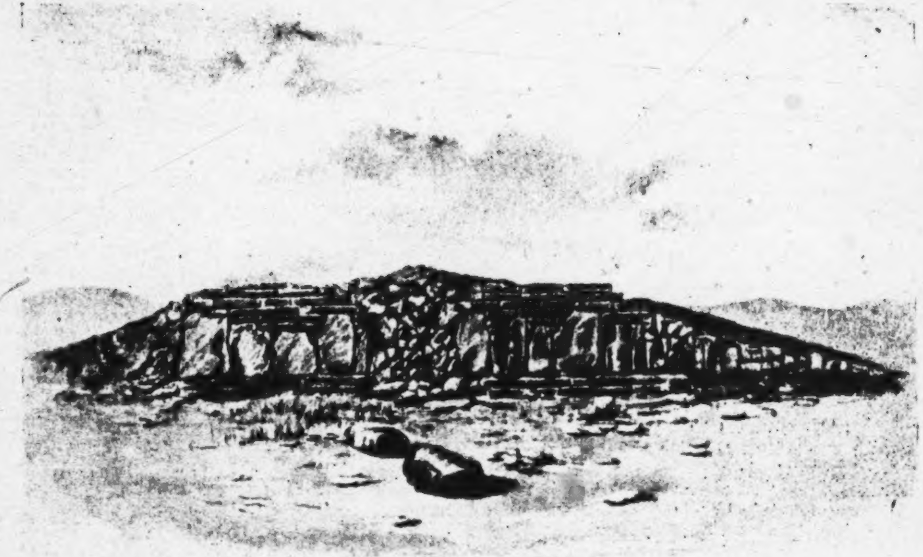
FIG. 42.



AHU MAITAKI-TE-MOA, SEAWARD SIDE.

An image ahu partially destroyed and changed to semi-pyramid type. A statue from Raraku lies in foreground; another statue of different stone forms part of the main wall.

[facing p. 174 (A)]

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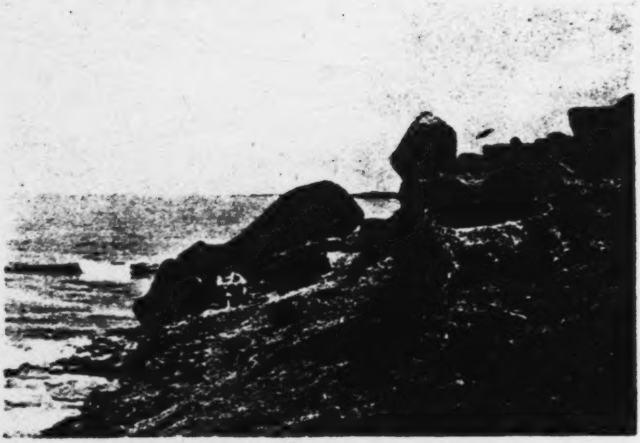
FIG. 43.



AHU RUNGA-VAE, ON SOUTH COAST, UNDERMINED BY THE SEA.

Statue has fallen backwards

[Facing p. 174 (B)]

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PREHISTORIC REMAINS

STATUES AND CROWNS

[facing p. 174 (c)]

[illegible]
Opposite fig. 43.]

FIG. 44.

102
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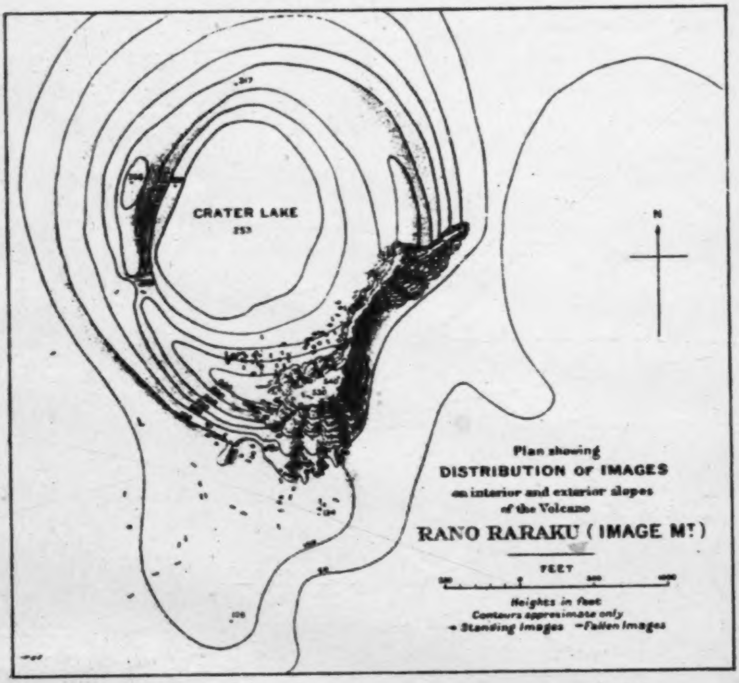
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CRATER LAKE
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Plan showing
DISTRIBUTION OF IMAGES
on interior and exterior slopes
of the Volcano
RANO RARAKU (IMAGE MT)
FEET
500
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Heights in feet
Contours approximate only
• Standing Images
– Fallen Images

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[facing p. 174 (D)]

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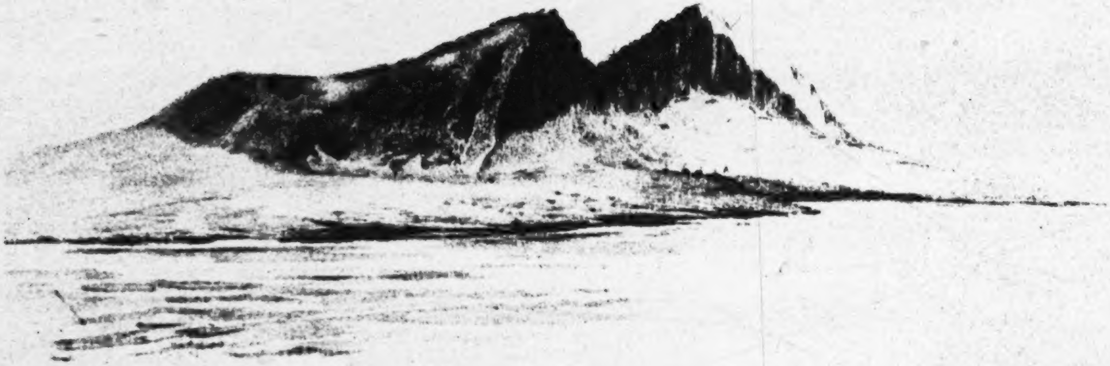
[facing p. 174 (E)]

FIG. 45.



RANO RARAKU FROM THE SEA

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[facing p. 174 (F-1)]

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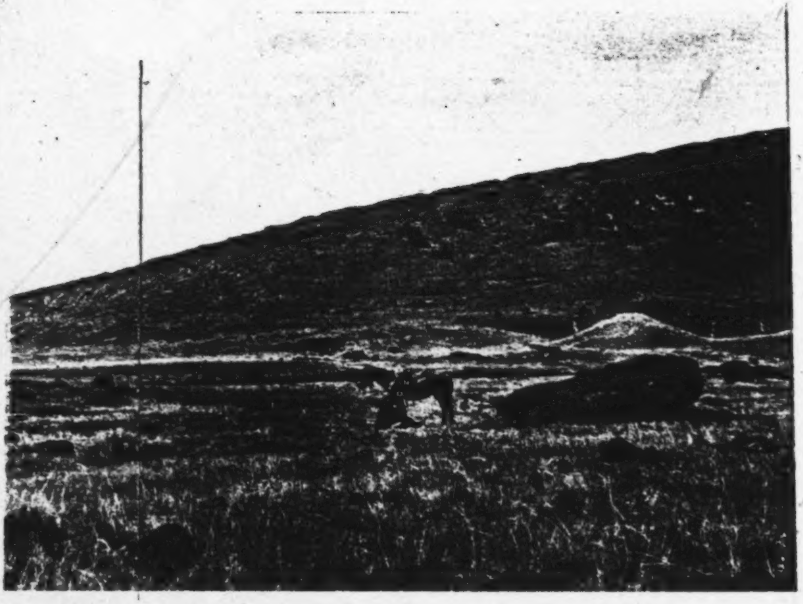

RANO RARAKU FROM THE SOUT
Images prostrate in foreground and erect on slop

[Facing p. 174 (F-2)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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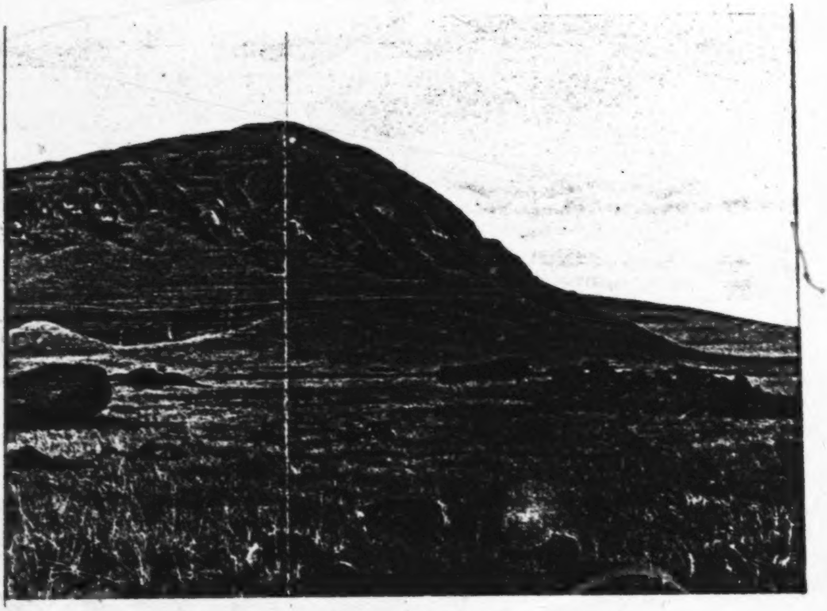

RAKU FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.
oreground and erect on slope; quarries above.

[facing p. 174 (F-3)]

FIG. 46.

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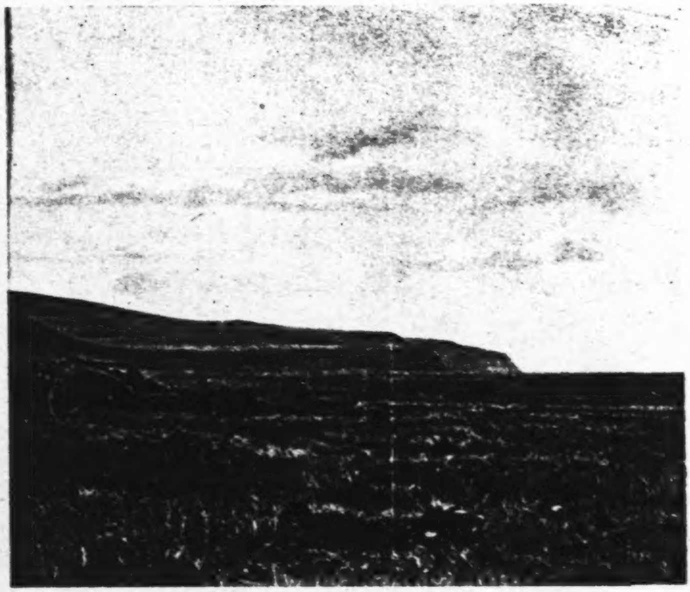

[facing p. 174 (F-4)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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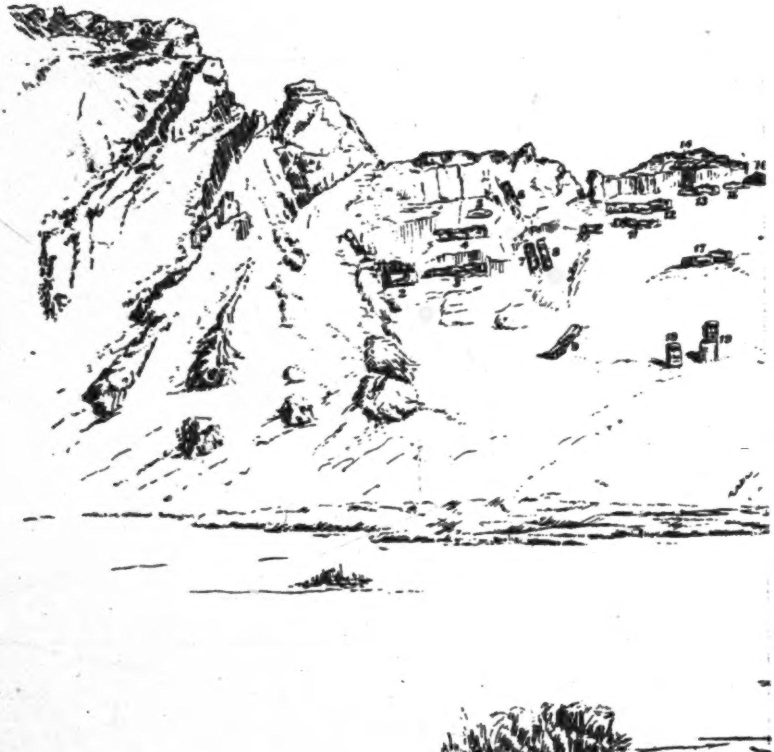

[facing p.174 (G-1)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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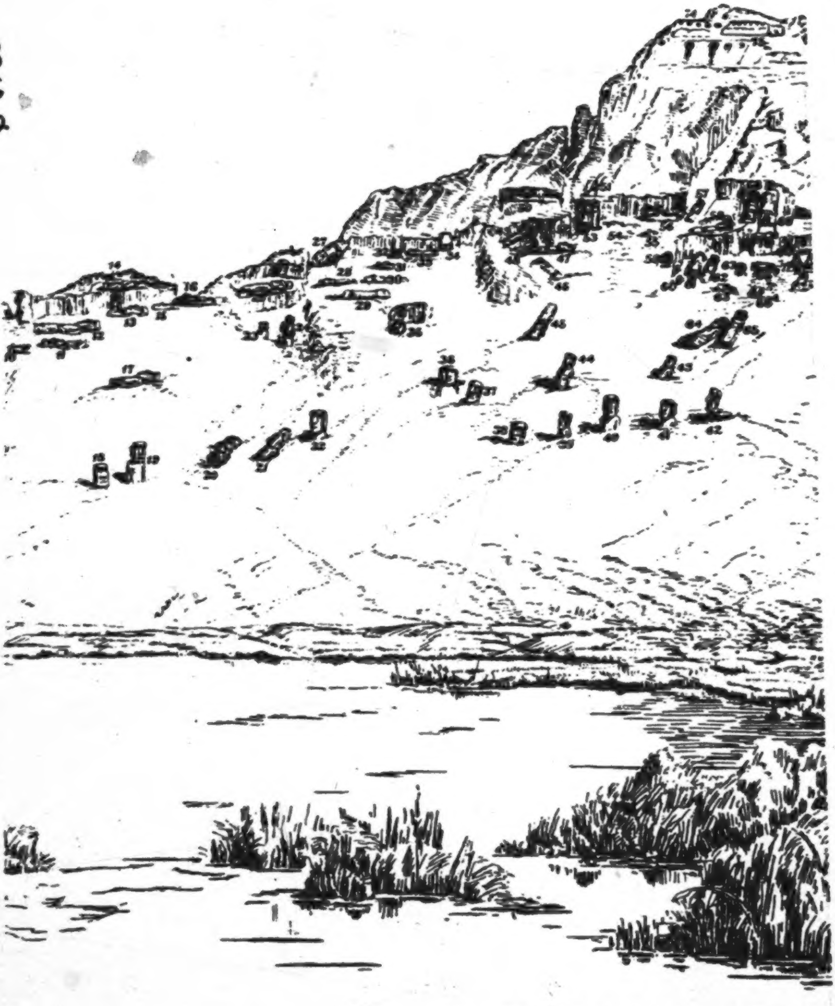

RANO RARAKU, INTERIOR OF CRATER.

Diagrammatic sketch showing position of statues on slope and i

[facing p.174 [G-2]]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919

OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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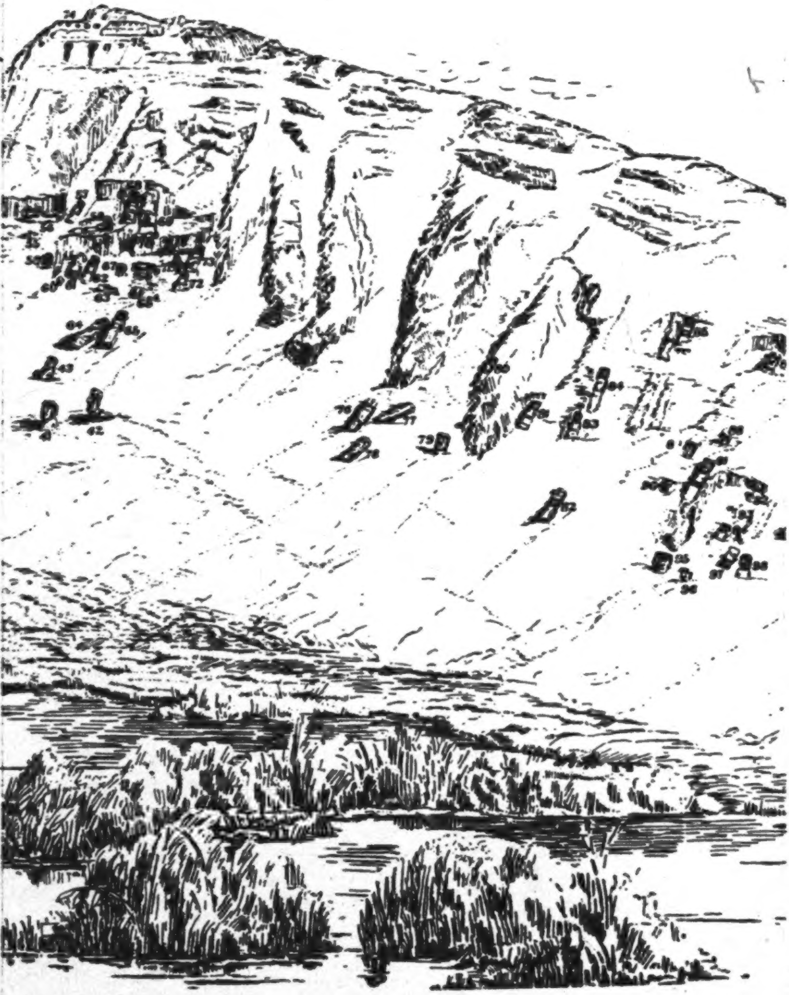

TERIOR OF CRATER.

ion of statues on slope and in quarry

[Facing p. 174 (G-3)]

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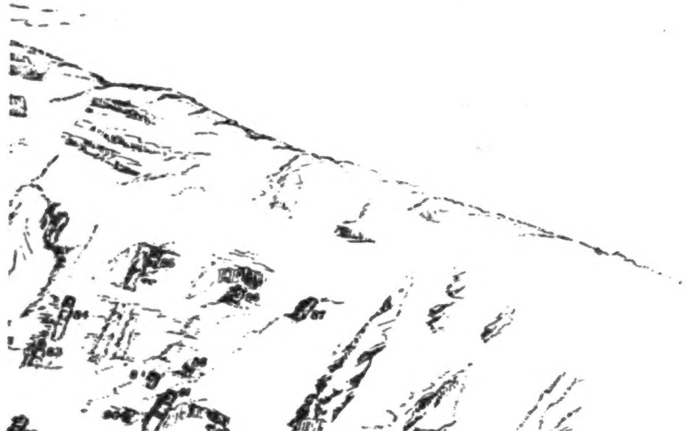
FIG. 47.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[facing p. 174 (G-4)]

174

from the accounts of the early voyagers, that the statues, or the greater number of them, were still in place in the eighteenth century; by the early part of the middle of the nineteenth century not one was standing.

The destruction of the ahu has continued in more modern days. A manager, whose sheep had found the fresh-water springs below high water, thinking they were injuring themselves by drinking from the sea, erected a wall round a large part of the coast to keep them from it. For this wall the ahu came in of course most conveniently; it was run through a great number and their material used for its construction. One wing of Tongariki has been pulled down to form an enclosure for the livestock. In addition to the damage wrought by man, the ocean is ever encroaching: in some cases part of an ahu has already fallen into the sea, and more is preparing to follow; statues may be found lying on their backs in process of descending into the waves (fig. 43). One row of images, on the extreme western edge of the crater of Rano Kao, which were visible, although inaccessible, at the time of the visit of the U.S.A. ship *Mohican* in 1886, are now lying on the shore a thousand feet below. As the result of these various causes the burial-places of Easter Island are, as has been seen, all in ruins, and many are scarcely recognisable; only their huge stones and prostrate figures show what they must once have been.

CHAPTER XIV

PREHISTORIC REMAINS (*continued*)

STATUES AND CROWNS

Rano Raraku, its Quarries and Standing Statues—the South-east Face of the Mountain—Isolated Statues—Roads—Stone Crowns of the Images.

STRANGE as it may appear, it is by no means easy to obtain a complete view of a statue on the island: most of the images which were formerly on the ahu lie on their faces, many are broken, and detail has largely been destroyed by weather. Happily, we are not dependent for our knowledge of the images on such information as we can gather from the ruins on the ahu, but are able to trace them to their origin, though even here excavation is necessary to see the entire figure. Rano Raraku is, as has already been explained, a volcanic cone containing a crater-lake. It resembles, to use an unromantic simile, one of the china drinking-vessels dedicated to the use of dogs, whose base is larger than their brim. Its sides are for the most part smooth and sloping, and several carriages could drive abreast on the northern rim of the crater, but towards the south-east it rises in height, and from this aspect it looks as if the circular mass had been sliced down with a giant knife forming it into a precipitous cliff. The cliff is lowest where the imaginary knife has come nearest to the central lake, thus causing the two ends to stand out as the peaks already mentioned (fig. 45). 172 133

The mountain is composed of compressed volcanic ash, which has been found in certain places to be particularly suitable for quarrying; it has been worked on the southern exterior slope, and also inside the crater both on the south and south-eastern sides. With perhaps a dozen exceptions, the 133 316

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316 whole of the images in the island have been made from it, and they have been dragged from this point up hill and down dale to adorn the terraces round the coast-line of the island; even the images on the ahu, which have fallen into the sea on the further extremity of the western volcano, are said to have been of the same stone. It is conspicuous in being a reddish brown colour, of which the smallest chips can be easily recognised. It is composite in character, and embedded in the ash are numerous lapilli of metamorphic rock. Owing to the nature of this rock the earliest European visitors came to the conclusion that the material was factitious and that the statues were built of clay and stones; it was curious to find that the marooned prisoners of war of our own time fell into the same mistake of thinking that the figures were "made up."

The workable belt, generally speaking, forms a horizontal section about half-way up the side of the mountain. Below it, both on the exterior and within the crater, are banks of detritus, and on these statues have been set up; most of them are still in place, but they have been buried in greater or less degree by the descent of earth from above (fig. 57). Mr. Ritchie made a survey of the mountain with the adjacent coast, but it was found impossible to record the results of our work without some sort of plan or diagram which was large enough to show every individual image. This was accomplished by first studying [126] each quarry, note-book in hand, and then, with the aid of field-glasses, amalgamating the results from below; the standing statues being inserted in their relation to the quarries above. It was a lengthy but enjoyable undertaking. Part of the diagram of the exterior has been redrawn with the help of photographs (fig. 60); the plan of the inside of the crater is shown in what is practically its original form (fig. 47).

316 *Quarries of Rano Raraku.*—Leaving on one side for the moment the figures on the lower slope, let us in imagination scramble up the grassy side, a steep climb of some one or two hundred feet to where the rock has been hewn away into a series of chambers and ledges. Here images lie by the score in all stages of evolution, just as they were left when, for some unknown reason, the workmen laid down their tools for the last time and the busy scene was still. Here, as elsewhere, the wonder of the place can only be appreciated as the eye becomes trained to see. In the

majority of cases the statues still form part of the rock, and are frequently covered with lichen or overgrown with grass and ferns; and even in the illustrations, for which prominent figures have naturally been chosen, the reader may find that he has to look more than once in order to recognise the form. A conspicuous one first strikes the beholder: as he gazes, he finds with surprise that the walls on either hand are themselves being wrought into figures, and that, resting in a niche above him, is another giant; he looks down, and realises with a start that his foot is resting on a mighty face. To the end of our visit we occasionally found a figure which had escaped observation.

Fig. 48.

[102]

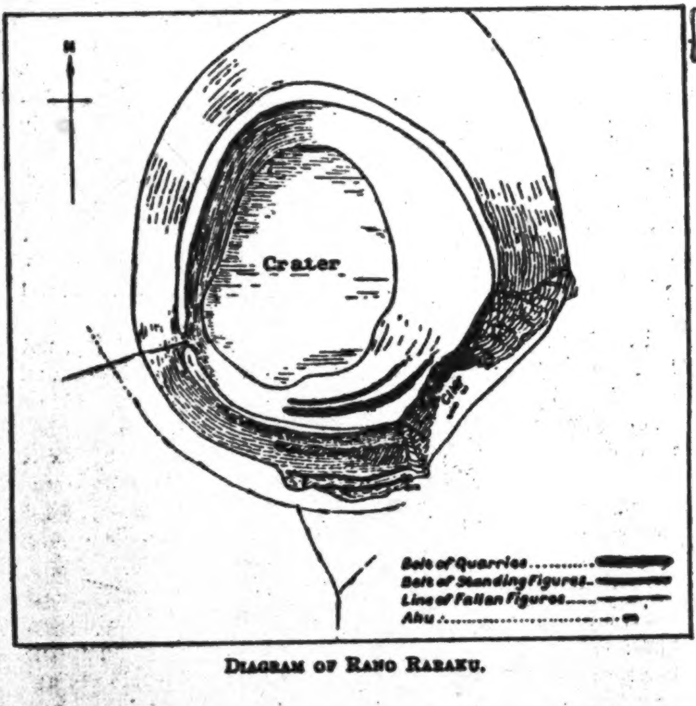

Diagram of Rano Raraku.

The workings on the exterior of Raraku first attract atten-

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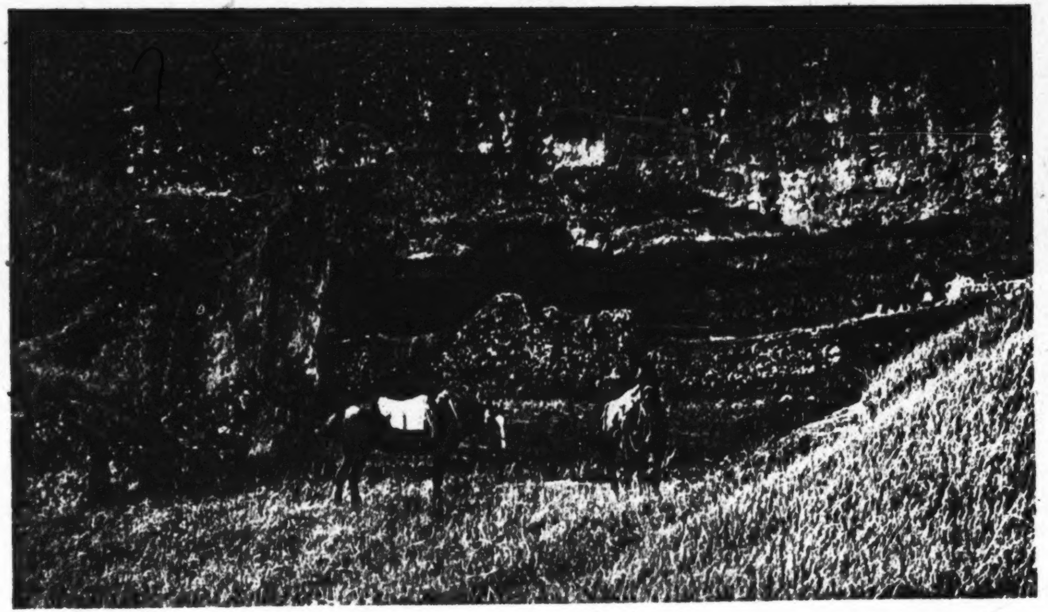
FIG. 49.

[Facing p.178]



STATUE IN QUARRY, PARTIALLY SCULPTURED.

[No. 41. Fig. 60.]

tion; here their size, and incidentally that of many of the statues, has largely been determined by fissures in the hillside, which run vertically and at distances of perhaps 40 feet. The quarries have been worked differently, and each has a character of its own. In some of them the principal figures lie in steps, with their length parallel to the hill's horizontal axis; one of this type is reached through a narrow opening in the rock, and recalls the side-chapel of some old cathedral, save that nature's blue sky forms the only roof (no. 74, fig. 60); immediately opposite the doorway there lies, on a base of rock, in quiet majesty, a great recumbent figure. So like is it to some ancient effigy that the awed spectator involuntarily catches his breath, as if suddenly brought face to face with a tomb of the mighty dead. Once, on a visit to this spot, a rather quaint little touch of nature supervened: going there early in the morning, with the sunlight still sparkling on the floor of dewy grass, a wild-cat, startled by our approach, rushed away from the rock above, and the natives, clambering up, found nestling beneath a statue at a high level a little family of blind kittens.

In other instances the images have been carved lying, not horizontally, but vertically, with sometimes the head, and sometimes the base, toward the summit of the hill. But no exact system has been followed, the figures are found in all places, and all positions. When there was a suitable piece of rock it has been carved into a statue, without any special regard to surroundings or direction. Interspersed with embryo and completed images are empty niches from which others have already been removed; and finished statues must, in some cases, have been passed out over the top of those still in course of construction. From all the outside quarries is seen the same wonderful panorama: immediately beneath are the statues which stand on the lower slopes; farther still lie the prostrate ones beside the approach; while beyond is the whole stretch of the southern plain, with its white line of breaking surf ending in the western mountain of Rano Kao (fig. 54).

The quarries within the crater are on the same lines as those without, save that those on the south-eastern side form a more continuous whole. Here the most striking position is on the top of the seaward cliff, in the centre of which is a large finished image (no. 16, fig. 47); on one side the ground falls away more or

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 50.

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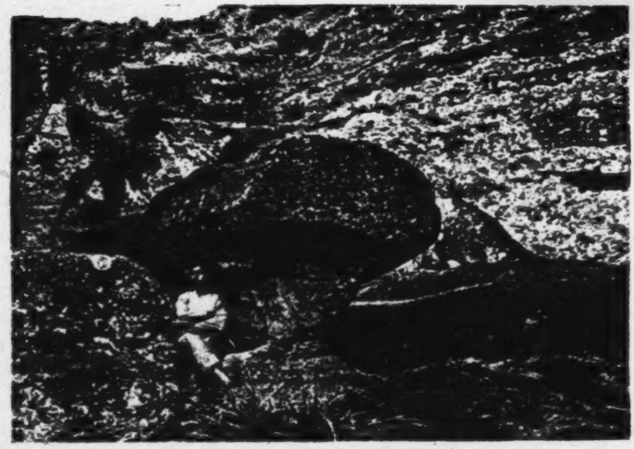
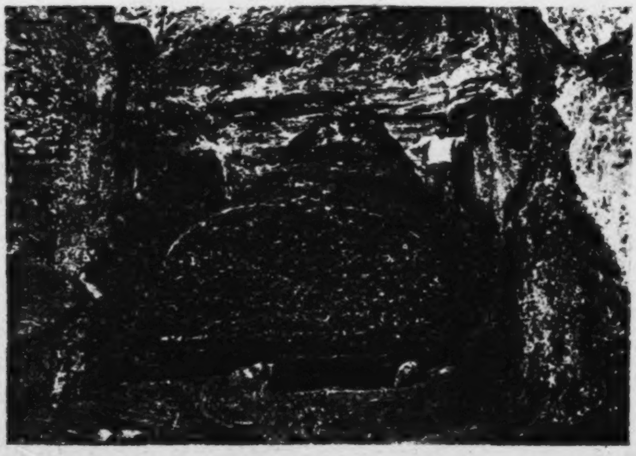


STATUE IN QUARRY.

Attached to rock by " keel " only. Top of head (flat surface) towards spectator.
[No. 61. Fig. 60.]

FIG. 51

[483]



STATUE IN QUARRY.

Ready to be launched; movement prevented by stone wedges. Base towards spectator.
[No. 57. Fig. 60.]

[facing p. 179]

less steeply to the crater-lake, on the other a stone thrown down would reach the foot of the precipice; the view extends from sea to sea. (Over all the most absolute stillness reigns.) 316

The statues in the quarries number altogether over 150. Amongst this mass of material there is no difficulty in tracing the course of the work. The surface of the rock, which will form the figure, has generally been laid bare before work upon it began, but occasionally the image was wrought lying partially under a canopy (fig. 49). In a few cases the stone has been roughed out into preliminary blocks (no. 58, fig. 60) but this procedure is not universal, and seems to have been followed only where there was some doubt as to the quality of the material. When this was not the case the face and anterior aspect of the statue were first carved, and the block gradually became isolated as the material was removed in forming the head, base, and sides. A gutter or alley-way was thus made round the image (fig. 55), in which the niches where each man has stood or squatted to his work can be clearly seen; it is, therefore, possible to count how many were at work at each side of a figure. 316 532

When the front and sides were completed down to every detail of the hands, the undercutting commenced. The rock beneath was chipped away by degrees till the statue rested only on a narrow strip of stone running along the spine; those which have been left at this stage resemble precisely a boat on its keel, the back being curved in the same way as a ship's bottom (fig. 50). In the next stage shown the figure is completely detached from the rock, and chocked up by stones, looking as if an inadvertent touch would send it sliding down the hill into the plain below (fig. 51). In one instance the moving has evidently begun, the image having been shifted out of the straight. In another very interesting case the work has been abandoned when the statue was in the middle of its descent; it has been carved in a horizontal position in the highest part of the quarry, where its empty niche is visible, it has then been slewed round and was being launched, base forward, across some other empty niches at a lower level. The bottom now rests on the floor of the quarry, and the figure, which has broken in half, is supported in a standing fashion against the outer edge of the vacated shelves. The first impression was that it had met with an accident in transit, and 316 483

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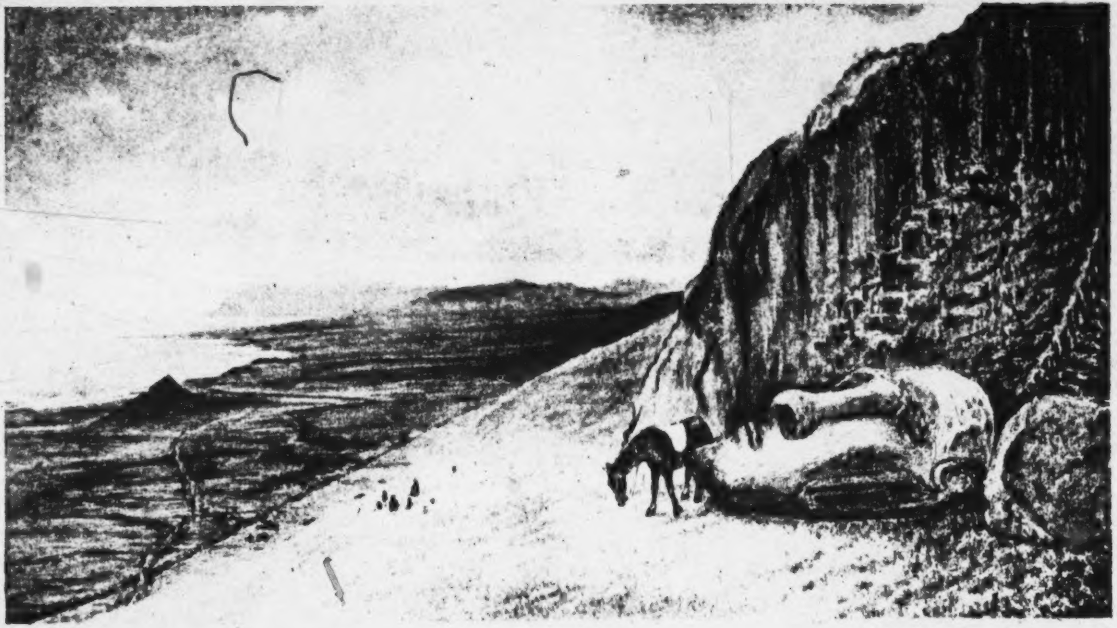
FIG. 54.

[Facing p. 180]



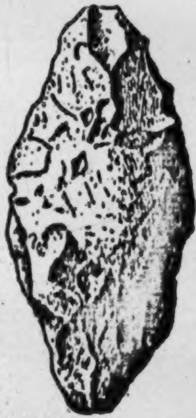
HEAD OF A STATUE AT MOUTH OF QUARRY FROM WHICH IT HAS BEEN HEWN.

[No. 72. Fig. 60.]

316 483 been abandoned; but it is at least equally possible that for the purpose of bringing it down, a bank or causeway of earth had been built up to level the inequalities of the descent, and that it was resting on this when the work came to an end; the soil would then in time be washed away, and the figure fracture through loss of support.

316 In the quarry which is shown in fig. 54, the finished head can be seen lying across the opening, the body is missing, presumably broken off and buried; the bottom of the keel on which the figure at one time rested can be clearly traced in a projecting line of rock down the middle of its old bed, also the different

[324 412]



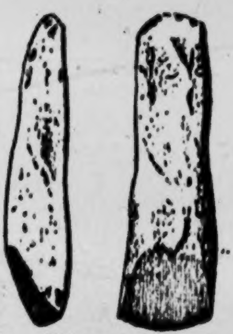


FIG. 52. STONE TOOLS (*Toki*). FIG. 53. *H. Balfour del.*

sections where the various men employed have chipped away the stone in undermining the statue. In the quarry wall the niches occupied by the sculptors are also visible, at more than one level, the higher ones being discarded when the upper portion of the work was finished and a lower station needed. The hand of the standing boy in fig. 51 rests on a small platform similarly abandoned.

316 324 412 The tools were found with which the work has been done. One type of these can be seen lying about in great abundance (fig. 52). They are of the same material as the lapilli in the statues, and made by flaking. Some specimens are pointed at both ends,

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 55.

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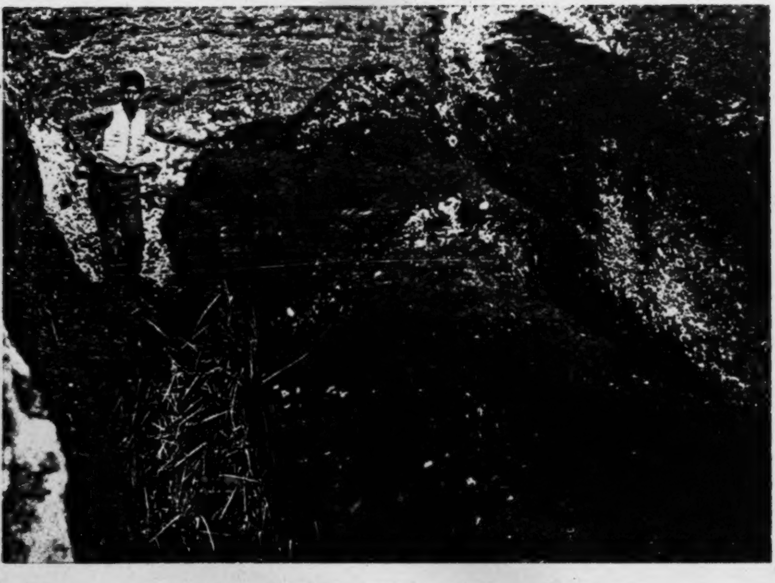

UPPER PORTION OF LARGEST IMAGE IN QUARRY, WITH ALLEY-WAY FOR WORKMEN.

[No. 64. Fig. 50.]

[facing p. 181]

others have one end more or less rounded. It is unlikely that they were hafted, and they were probably held in the hand when in use. They were apparently discarded as soon as the point became damaged. There is another tool much more carefully made, an adze blade, with the lower end bevelled off to form the cutting edge. In the specimen shown, the top is much abraded apparently from hammering with a maul or mallet (fig. 53). These are rarely found, the probability being that they were too precious to leave and were taken home by the workmen. The whole process was not necessarily very lengthy; a calculation of the number of men who could work at the stone at the same time, and the amount each could accomplish, gave the rather surprising result that a statue might be roughed out within the space of fifteen days. The most notable part of the work was the skill which kept the figure so perfect in design and balance that it was subsequently able to maintain its equilibrium in a standing position; to this it is difficult to pay too high a tribute. 316 324 412

It remains to account for the vast number of images to be found in the quarry. A certain number have, no doubt, been abandoned prior to the general cessation of the work; in some cases a flaw has been found in the rock and the original plan has had to be given up—in this case, part of the stone is sometimes used for either a smaller image or one cut at a different angle. In other instances the sculptors have been unlucky enough to come across at important points one or more of the hard nodules with which their tools could not deal, and as the work could not go down to posterity with a large wart on its nose or excrescence on its chin, it has had to be stopped. But when all these instances have been subtracted, the amount of figures remaining in the quarries is still startlingly large when compared with the number which have been taken out of it, and must have necessitated, if they were all in hand at once, a number of workers out of all proportion to any population which the island has ever been likely to have maintained. The theory naturally suggests itself that some were merely rock-carvings and not intended to be removed. It is one which needs to be adopted with caution, for more than once, where every appearance has pointed to its being correct, a similar neighbour has been found which was actually being removed; on the whole, however, there can be 316

316 little doubt that it is at any rate a partial solution of the problem. Some of the images are little more than embossed carvings on the face of the rock without surrounding alley-ways. In one instance, inside the crater, a piece of rock which has been left standing on the very summit of the cliff has been utilised in such a way that the figure lies on its side, while its back is formed by the outward precipice (fig. 56); this is contrary to all usual methods, and it seems improbable that it was intended to make it into a standing statue. Perhaps the strongest evidence is afforded by the size of some of the statues: the largest (fig. 55; no. 64, fig. 60) is 66 feet in length, whereas 36 feet is the extreme ever found outside the quarry; tradition, it is true, points out the ahu on the south coast for which this monster was designed, but it is difficult to believe it was ever intended to move such a mass. If this theory is correct, it would be interesting to know whether the stage of carving came first, and that of removal followed, as the workmen became more expert; or whether it was the result of decadence when labour may have become scarce. It is, of course, possible that the two methods proceeded concurrently, rock-carvings being within the means of those who could not procure the labour necessary to move the statue.

173 Legendary lore throws no light on these matters, nor on the reasons which led to the desertion of this labyrinth of work; it has invented a story which entirely satisfies the native mind and is repeated on every occasion. There was a certain old woman who lived at the southern corner of the mountain and filled the position of cook to the image-makers. She was the most important person of the establishment, and moved the images by supernatural power (*mana*), ordering them about at her will. One day, when she was away, the workers obtained a fine lobster, which had been caught on the west coast, and ate it up, leaving none for her; unfortunately they forgot to conceal the remains, and when the cook returned and found how she had been treated, she arose in her wrath, told all the images to fall down, and thus brought the work to a standstill.

532 *Standing Statues of Rano Raraku.*—Descending from the quarries, we turn to the figures below. A few at the foot of the mountain have obviously been thrown down; one of these (no. 6, fig. 60) was wrecked in the same conflict as the one on Ahu Paro,

and one is shown where an attempt has been made to cut off the head. Another series of images have originally stood round the base on level ground (nos. 1, 2, 3, fig. 60), extending from the exterior of the entrance to the crater to the southern corner; these are all prostrate. On the slopes there are a few horizontal statues, but the great majority, both inside the crater and without, are still erect. Outside, some forty figures stand in an irregular belt, reaching from the corner nearest the sea to about half-way to the gap leading into the crater. The bottom of the mountain is here diversified by little hillocks and depressions; these hillocks would have made commanding situations, but rather curiously the statues, while erected quite close to them, and even on their sides, are never on the top. Inside the crater, where some twenty statues are still erect, the arrangement is rather more regular; but, on the whole, they are put up in no apparent order. All stood with their backs to the mountain. 532

They vary very considerably in size; the tallest which could be measured from its base was 32 feet 3 inches, while others are not much above 11 feet. Every statue is buried in greater or less degree, but while some are exposed as far as the elbow, in others only a portion of the top of the head can be seen above the surface (fig. 57) others no doubt are covered entirely. The number visible must vary from time to time, as by the movement of the earth some are buried and others disclosed. An old man, whose testimony was generally reliable, stated, when speaking of the figures on the outside of the mountain, that while those nearer the sea were in the same condition as he always remembered them, those farther from it were now more deeply buried than in his youth.

Various old people were brought out from the village at Hanga Roa to pay visits to the camp, but the information forthcoming was never of great extent; one elderly gentleman in particular took much more interest in roaming round the mountain, recalling various scenes of his youth, than in anything connected with the statues. A few names are still remembered in connection with the individual figures, and are said to be those of the makers of the images, and some proof is afforded of the reality of the tradition by the fact that the clans of the persons named are consistently given. Another class of names is, however, obviously derived merely from local circumstances; 532 552

532 one in the quarry, under a drip from above, is known by the
equivalent for "Dropping Water," while a series inside the
552 crater are called after the birds which frequent the cliff-side,
"Kia-kia, Flying," "Kia-kia, Sitting," and so forth. A solitary
legend relates to an unique figure, resembling rather a block
than an image, which lies on the surface on the outside of the
532 mountain (no. 24, fig. 60). It is the single exception to the rule
173 mentioned above, that no evolution can be traced in the statues
on the island. The usual conception is there, and the hands
are shown, but the head seems to melt into the body and the
ear and arm to have become confused. It is said to have been
the first image made and is known as Tai-haré-atua, which
tradition says was the name of the maker. He found himself
unable to fashion it properly, and went over to the other side
of the island to consult with a man who lived near Hanga Roa,
named Rauwai-ika. He stayed the night there, but the expert
remained silent, and he was retiring disappointed in the morning,
when he was followed by his host, who called him back. "Make
your image," said he, "like me,"—that is, in form of a man.

000 On our first visit to the mountain, overcome by the wonder of the scene, we turned to our Fernandez boy and asked him what he thought of the statues. Like the classical curate, when the bishop inquired as to the character of his egg, he struggled manfully between the desire to please and a sense of truth; like the curate, he took refuge in compromise. "Some of them," he said doubtfully, he thought "were very nice." If the figures at first strike even the cultured observer as crude and archaic, it must be remembered that not only are they the work of stone tools, but to be rightly seen should not be scrutinised near at hand. "Hoa-haka-nanaia," for instance, is wholly and dismally out of place under a smoky portico, but on the slopes of a mountain, gazing in impenetrable calm over sea and land, the simplicity of outline is soon found to be marvellously impressive. The longer the acquaintance the more this feeling strengthens; there is always the sense of quiet dignity, of suggestion and of mystery.

While the scene on Raraku always arouses a species of awe, it is particularly inspiring at sunset, when, as the light fades, the images gradually become outlined as stupendous black figures against the gorgeous colouring of the west. The most

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
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FIG. 58.

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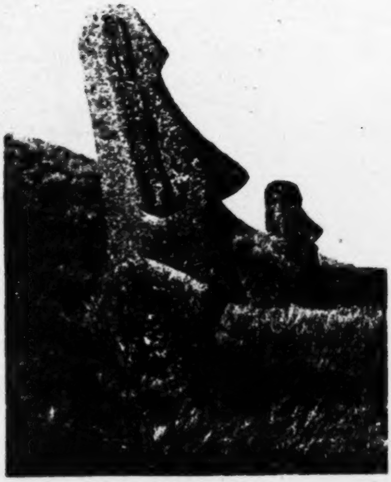
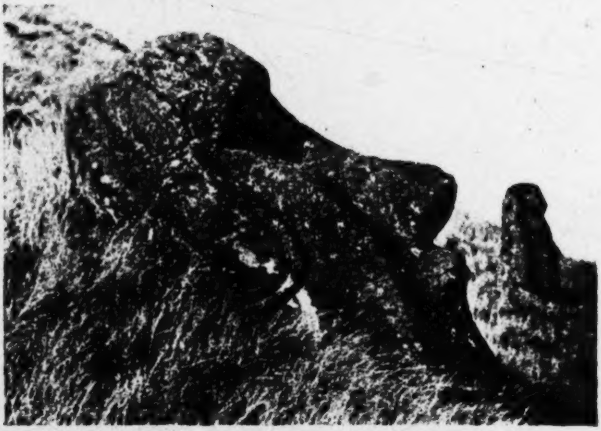


STATUES ON RANO RARAKU, SHOWING DISTENSION OF EAR.

LOBE REPRESENTED AS A ROPE.

[Nos. 27 and 29. Fig. 60.]

FIG. 59.



LOBE CONTAINING A DISC.

[No. 23. Fig. 60.]

[facing p. 184 (A)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 60A.

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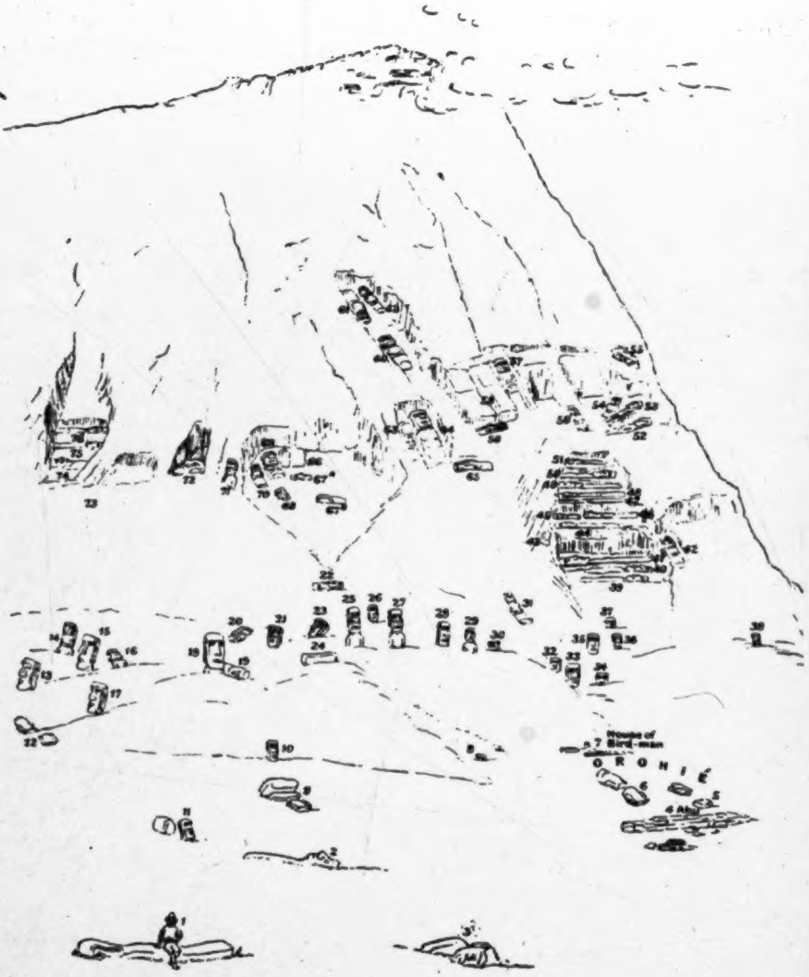

House of
7 Bird-man
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KEY TO DIAGRAMMATIC SKETCH.

[184A

[facing p: 184 (B)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 60.

316
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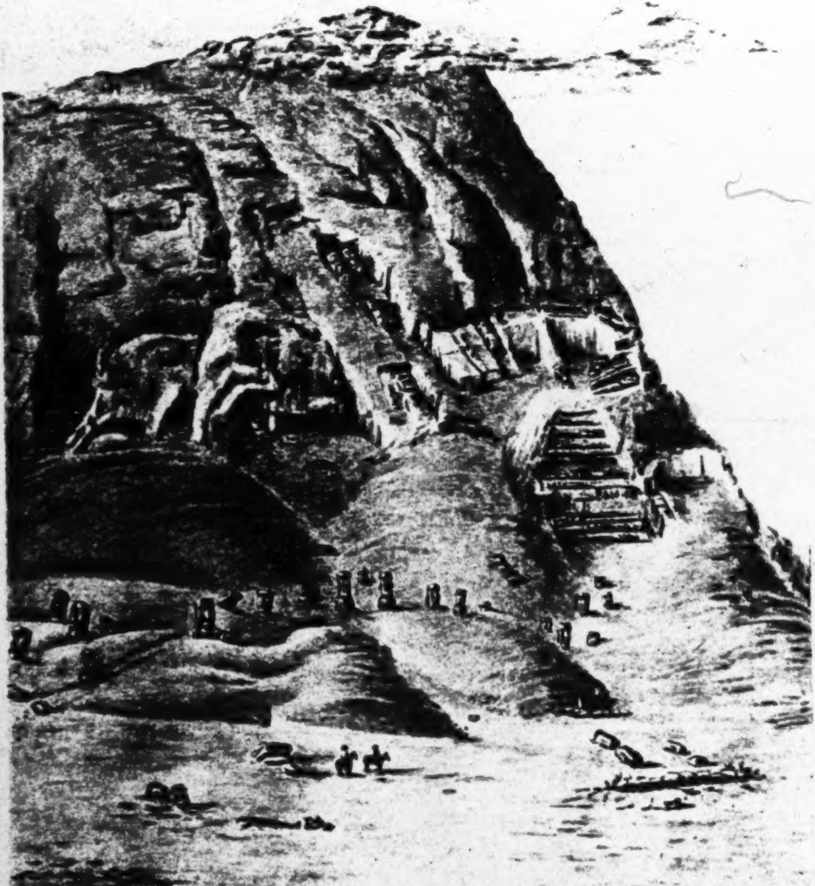


EXTERIOR OF RANO RARAKU. EASTERN PORTION OF SOUTHERN ASPECT.

Diagrammatic sketch showing position of statues.

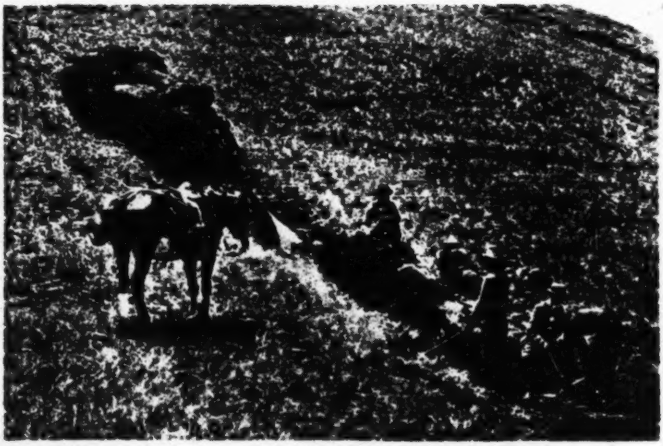
184B]

[facing p. 184 (c)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 61.

532



DIGGING OUT A STATUE.
For same image after excavation see fig. 69.

[facing p. 185]

striking sight witnessed on the island was a fire on the hill-side; 600 in order to see our work more clearly we set alight the long dry grass, always a virtuous act on Easter Island that the live-stock may have the benefit of fresh shoots; in a moment the whole was a blaze, the mountain, wreathed in masses of driving smoke, grew to portentous size, the quarries loomed down from above as dark giant masses, and in the whirl of flame below the great statues stood out calmly, with a quiet smile, like stoical souls in Hades.

The questions which arise are obvious: do these buried statues 172 differ in any way from those in the workings above, from those on the ahu or from one another? were they put up on any foundation? and, above all, what is the history of the mountain and the *raison d'être* of the figures? In the hope of throwing some light on these problems we started to dig them out. It had originally been thought that the excavation of one or two would give all the information which it was possible to obtain, but each case was found to have unique and instructive features, and we finally unearthed in this way, wholly or in part, some twenty or thirty statues. It was usually easy to trace the stages by which the figures had been gradually covered. On the top was a layer of surface soil, from 3 to 8 inches in depth; then came debris, which had descended from the quarry above in the form of rubble, it contained large numbers of chisels, some forty of which have been found in digging out one statue; below this was the substance in which a hole had been dug to erect the image, it sometimes consisted of clay and occasionally in part of rock. Not unfrequently the successive descents of earth could be traced by the thin lines of charcoal which marked the old surfaces, obviously the result of grass or brushwood fires. The few statues which are in a horizontal position are always on the surface (no. 31, fig. 60) and at first give the impression that they have been abandoned in the course of being brought down from the quarries; as they are frequently found close to standing images, of which only the head is visible, it follows that, if this is the correct solution, the work must still have been proceeding when the earlier statues were already largely submerged. The juxtaposition, however, occurs so often that it seems, on the whole, more probable that the rush of earth which covered some, upset the foundations of others, and either threw them

[facing p. 186]

532

FIG. 62.

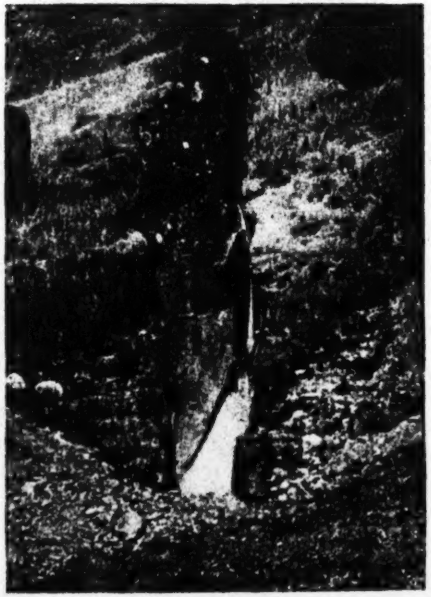
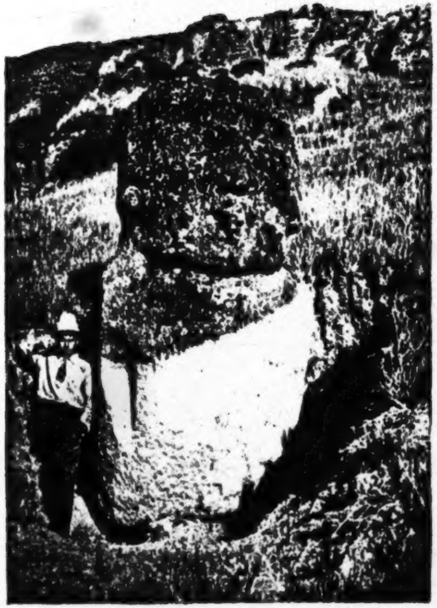


FIG. 63.



EXCAVATED IMAGES.

Showing effect of weathering and peg-shaped base.
[No. 107. Fig. 47.]

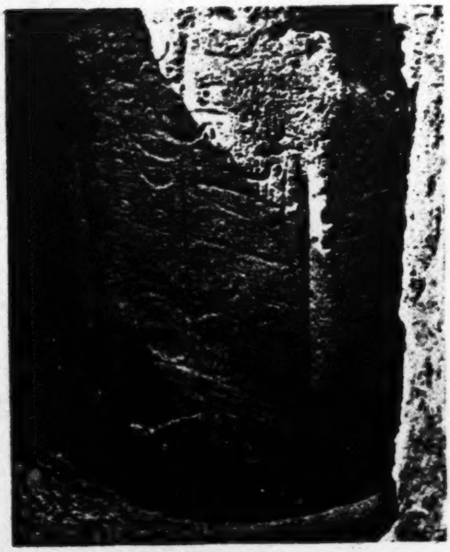
Showing scamped work in lower part of figure, no right hand carved, and surface only coarsely chiselled.
[No. 36. Fig. 47.]

172 down where they stood or carried them with it on top of the flood. These various landslips allow of no approximate deductions as to the date, in the manner which is possible with successively deposited layers of earth.

To get absolutely below the base of an image was not altogether easy. The first we attempted to dig out was one of the farther ones within the crater (no. 19, fig. 47); it was found that, while the back of the hole into which it had been dropped was excavated in the soft volcanic ash, the front and remaining sides were of hard rock. This rock was cut to the curvature of the figure at a distance of some 3 inches from it, and as the chisel marks were horizontal, from right to left, the workmen must have stood in the cup while preparing it: in clearing out the alluvium between the wall of the cup and the figure, six stone implements were found. The hands, which were about 1 foot below the level of the rim, were perfectly formed. The next statue chosen for excavation was also inside the crater (no. 107, fig. 47); it was most easily attacked from the side, and this time it was possible to get low enough to see that it stood on no foundation, and that the base instead of expanding, as with those which stood on the ahu, contracted in such a manner as to give a peg-shaped appearance; this confirmed the impression made by the previous excavation, that the image was intended to remain in its hole and was not, as some have stated, merely awaiting removal to an ahu (fig. 62).

The story was shown not only in the sections of the excavation, but in the degrees of weathering on the figure itself: the lowest part of the image to above the elbow exhibited, by the sharpness of its outlines and frequently of the chisel cuts also, that it had never been exposed, the other portions being worn in relative degrees. Traces of the smoothness of the original surface can still be seen above-ground in the more protected portions of some of the statues, such as in the orbit and under the chin (see frontispiece); but a much clearer impression is of course gained of the finish and detail of the image when the unweathered surface is exposed. The polish is often very beautiful, and pieces of
172 pumice, called "punga," are found, with which the figures are said
532 to have been rubbed down. The fingers taper, and the excessive length of the thumb-joint and nail are remarkable (fig. 72). The nipples are in some cases so pronounced that the natives

FIG. 64.



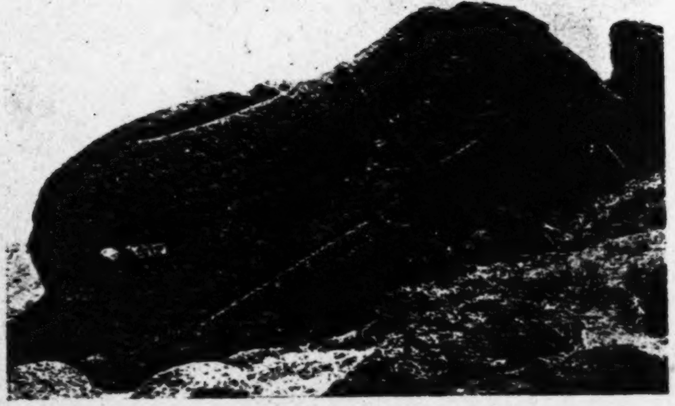
DESIGNS ON BACKS OF IMAGES.

BACK OF AN EXCAVATED STATUE.

Showing (*a*) typical raised rings and girdle; (*b*) exceptional incised carvings.

[No. 109. Fig. 47.]

FIG. 65.



P. Edmunds.

STATUE ON AN AHU AT ANAKENA.

Rings on centre and lower portion of back.

[facing p. 187]

often characterised them as feminine, but in no case which we came across did the statues represent other than the nude male figure[1]; the navel is indicated by a raised disc. On the statue with the contracting base, which is one of the best, the surface modelling of the elbow-joint is clearly shown. The orbital cavity in the figures on Raraku is rather differently modelled from those on the ahu; in the statues on the mountain the position of the eyeball is always indicated by a straight line below the brow, the orbit has no lower border (fig. 72). On the terraces the socket is constantly hollowed out as in the figure at the British Museum (fig. 31).

The eye is the only point in which the two sets vary, with the important exception that some on the mountain have a type of back which never appears on the ahu. This question of back proved to be of special interest: in some images it remained exactly as when the figure left the quarry, the whole was convex, giving it a thick and archaic appearance, particularly as regards the neck; in other instances, the posterior was beautifully modelled after the same fashion as those on the terraces, the stone had been carefully chipped away till the ears stood out from the back of the head, the neck assumed definite form, and the spine, instead of standing out as a sharp ridge, was represented by an incised line. This second type, when excavated, proved, to our surprise, to possess a well-carved design in the form of a girdle shown by three raised bands, this was surmounted by one or sometimes by two rings, and immediately beneath it was another design somewhat in the shape of an M (figs. 64 and 106). The whole was new, not only to us, but to the natives, who greatly admired it. Later, when we knew what to look for, traces of the girdle could be seen also on the figures on the ahu where the arm had protected it from the weather. (It was afterwards realised with amusement that the discovery of this design might have been made before leaving England by merely passing the barrier and walking behind the statues in the Bloomsbury portico.) One case was found, a statue at Anakena, where a ring was visible, not only on the back but also on each of the buttocks, and in view of subsequent information these lower rings became of special importance. The girdle in this case consisted of one line only; the detail of the

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[1] The sole possible exception was probably due to some flaw in the stone.

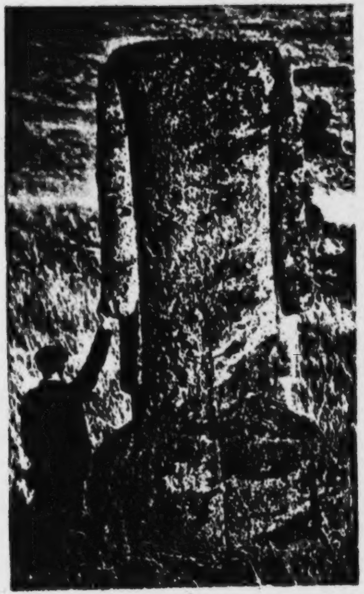
532

[facing p. 188]

FIG. 66.

Unmodelled.

FIG. 67.



Modelled.

BACKS OF STANDING STATUES, RANO RARAKU.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OYZ Easter Islanders OYZ

carving had doubtless been preserved by being buried in the sand (fig. 65). The two forms of back, unmodelled and modelled, stand side by side on the mountain (figs. 66, 67).

The next step was to discover where and when the modelling was done. Certainly not in the original place in the quarry, where it would be impossible from the position in which the image was evolved; generally speaking there was no trace of such work, and it was not until many months later that new light was thrown on the matter. Then it was remarked that in one of the standing statues on the outside of the hill, which was buried up to the neck (fig. 59), while the right ear was most carefully modelled, showing a disc, the left ear was as yet quite plain, and that the back of the head also was not symmetrical. Excavations made clear that the whole back was in course of transformation from the boat-shaped to the modelled type, each workman apparently chipping away where it seemed to him good (fig. 68). Two or three similar cases were then found on which work was proceeding; but on the other hand, some of the simpler backs were excavated to the foot, and others a considerable distance, and there was no indication that any alteration was intended. There are three possible explanations for these erect and partially moulded statues: Firstly, it may have been the regular method for the back to be completed after the statue was set up, in which case some kind of staging must have been used; one of our guides had made a remark, noted, but not taken very seriously at the moment, that " the statues were set up to be finished "; some knowledge or tradition of such work, therefore, appeared to linger. Secondly, the convex back may be the older form, and those on which work was being done were being modelled to bring them up to date. Alteration did at times take place; a certain small image presented a very curious appearance both from the proportion of the body, which was singularly narrow from back to front, and because it was difficult to see how it remained in place as it was apparently exposed to the base; it turned out that the figure had been carved out of the head of an older statue, of which the body was buried below (no. 14, fig. 60). Thirdly, these particular figures may have been erected and left in an unfinished condition; if so, their deficiencies were high up and would be obvious.

Scamping did not often occur, and when it did so it was in

[facing p. 189]

FIG. 68.

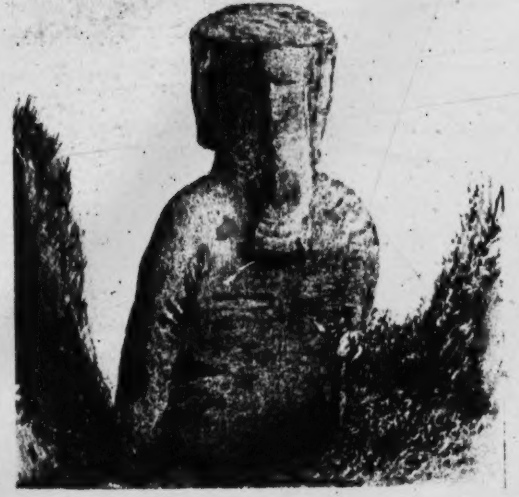
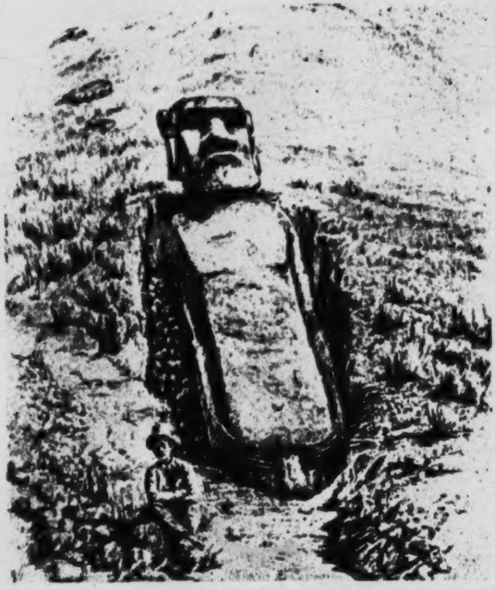


FIG. 69.



EXCAVATED STATUES.

Showing back in process of being modelled.
[No. 23. Fig. 50.]

Showing image wedged by boulders.

the concealed portions. In one case the left hand was correctly 532 modelled, but the right was not even indicated beyond the wrist (fig. 63). The statue shown in the frontispiece, which rejoices in the name of Piro-piro, meaning "bad odour,"[1] stands at the foot of the slope, and appears to remain as it was set up without further burial. It is a well-made figure, probably one of the most recent, and the upper part of the back is carefully moulded, but on digging it out it was found that the bottom had not been finished, but left in the form of a rough excrescence of stone; there was no ring, but a girdle had been carved on the protruding portion, so that this was not intended to be removed. In another instance a large head had fallen on a slope at such an angle that it was impossible to locate the position of the body; curiosity led to investigation, when it was found that the thing was a fraud, the magnificent head being attached to a little dwarf trunk, which must have been buried originally nearly to the neck to keep the top upright. These instances of "jerry-building" confirm our impression that at any rate a large number of the statues were intended to remain *in situ*.

Indications were found of two different methods of erection, 532 and the mode may have been determined by the nature of the 483 ground. By the first procedure the statue seems to have been placed on its face in the desired spot, and a hole to have been dug beneath the base. The other method was to undermine the base, with the statue lying face uppermost; in several instances a number of large stones were found behind the back of the figure, evidently having been used to wedge it while it was dragged to the vertical. The upright position had sometimes been only partially attained; one statue was still in a slanting attitude, corresponding exactly to the slope of a hard clay wall behind it; the interval between the two, varying from three yards to eighteen inches, had been packed with sub-angular boulders which weighed about one hundredweight, or as much as a man could lift (fig. 69).

A few of the figures bear incised markings rudely, and apparently promiscuously, carved. 532 This was first noted in the case of one of two statues which stand together nearest to the entrance of the crater; here it has been found possible to work the rock at a low level, and in the empty quarry, from which they no

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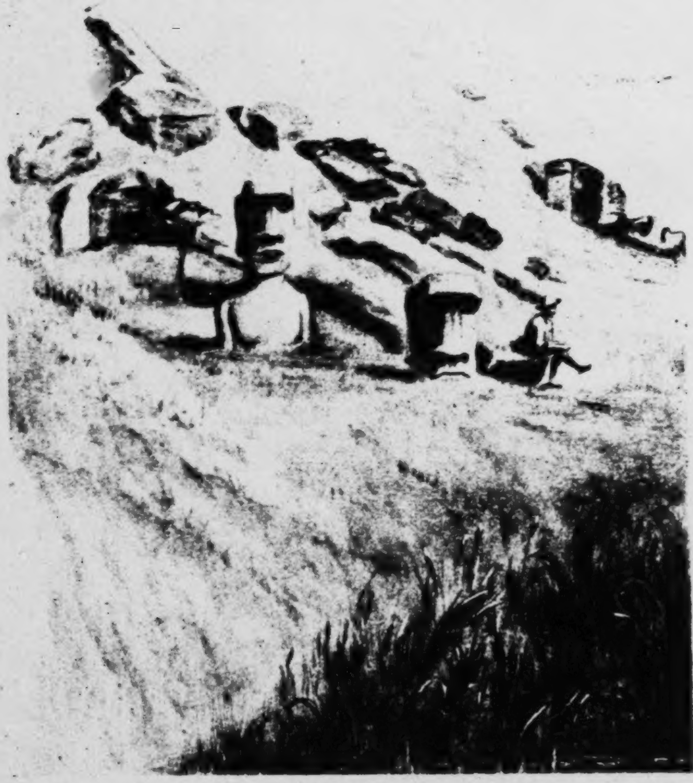
[1] The farthest outstanding figure to the left in fig. 46.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

532

FIG. 70.



TWO IMAGES ERECTED IN QUARRY. FRONT VIEW.
Prior to excavation.
[Nos. 108–109. Fig. 47.]

[facing p. 190]

doubt have been taken, two images have been set up, one slightly
532 in front of the other; six still unfinished figures lie in close proximity (figs. 70 and 71). The standing figure, nearest to the lake, bore a rough design on the face, and when it was dug out the back was found to be covered with similar incised marks.
[123] (The natives were much excited, and convinced that we should receive a large sum of money in England when the photograph of these was produced, for nothing ever dispelled the illusion that the expedition was a financial speculation. It was these carvings more especially that we ourselves hastily endeavoured to cover up when, on the arrival of Admiral von Spee's Squadron, we daily expected a visit from the officers on board. The markings have certainly not been made by the same practised hand as the raised girdle and rings, and appear to be comparatively recent (fig. 64). Other statues were excavated, where similar marks were noticed, but, except in this case, digging led practically always to disappointment. It was the part above the surface only which had been used as a block on which to scrawl design, from the same impulse presumably as impels the school-boy of to-day to make marks with chalk on a hoarding. On one ahu the top of the head of a statue has been decorated with rough faces, the carving evidently having been done after the statue had fallen.

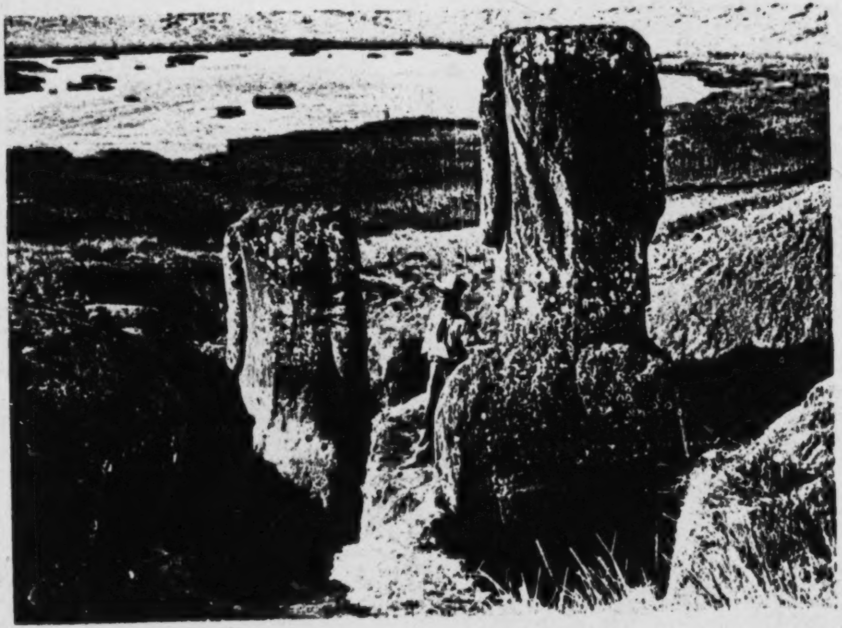
In digging out the image with the tattooed back, we came
172 across the one and only burial which was found in connection
532 with these figures; it was close to it and at the level of the rings.
764 The long bones, the patella, and base of the skull were identified; they lay in wet soil, crushed and intermixed with large stones, so the attitude could not be determined beyond the fact that the head was to the right of the image and the long bones to the left. These bones had become of the consistency of moist clay, and could only be identified by making transverse sections of them with a knife, after first cleaning portions longitudinally by careful scraping.

In several other instances human bones were discovered near the statues, but, like the carvings, they appeared to be of later date than the images. One skull was found beneath a figure which was lying face downwards on the surface; another fragment must have been placed behind the base after the statue had fallen forward. The natives stated that in the epidemics which

[Facing p. 191]

532

FIG. 71.



TWO IMAGES ERECTED IN QUARRY. BACK VIEW.

After excavation.

[Nos. 109–108. Fig. 47. See also Fig. 64.]

ravaged the island the statues afforded a natural mark for 172
depositing remains. In the same way a head near an ahu, which
was at first thought to be that of a standing statue, turned out 532
to be broken from the trunk and put up pathetically to mark 764
the grave of a little child. There is a roughly constructed ahu on the outside of Rano Raraku at the corner nearest to the sea, of which more will be said hereafter, and a quarried block of rock on the very top of the westerly peak was also said to be used for the exposure of the dead (no. 75, fig. 47). Close to this block there are some very curious circular pits cut in the rock; one examined was 5 feet 6 inches in depth and 3 feet 6 inches in diameter (no. 74, fig. 47). It is possible they were used as vaults, but, if so, the shape is quite different from those of the ahu. The conclusion arrived at was that the statues themselves were not directly connected with burials. There seems also no reason to believe that they are put up in any order or method; they appear to have been erected on any spot handy to the quarries where there was sufficient earth, or even, as has been seen, in the quarry itself when circumstances permitted.

The South-Eastern Side of Rano Raraku is a problem in itself. 172
The great wall formed by the cliff is like the ramparts of some giant castle rent by vertical fissures. The greatest height, the top of the peak, is about five hundred feet, of which the cliff forms perhaps half, the lower part being a steep but comparatively smooth bank of detritus. Over the grassy surface of this bank are scattered numerous fragments of rock, weighing from a few pounds to many tons, which have fallen down from above. The kitchen tent in our camp at the foot had a narrow escape from being demolished by one of these stones, which nearly carried it away in the impetus of its descent. It has never been suggested that this face of the mountain was being worked, nevertheless, it was subsequently difficult to understand how we lived so long below it, gazing at it daily, before we appreciated the fact that here also, although in much lesser degree, were both finished and embryo images. At last one stone was definitely seen to be in the form of a head, and excavation showed it to be an erected and buried statue. A few other figures were found standing and prostrate, and some unfinished images; these last, however,

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FIG. 72.

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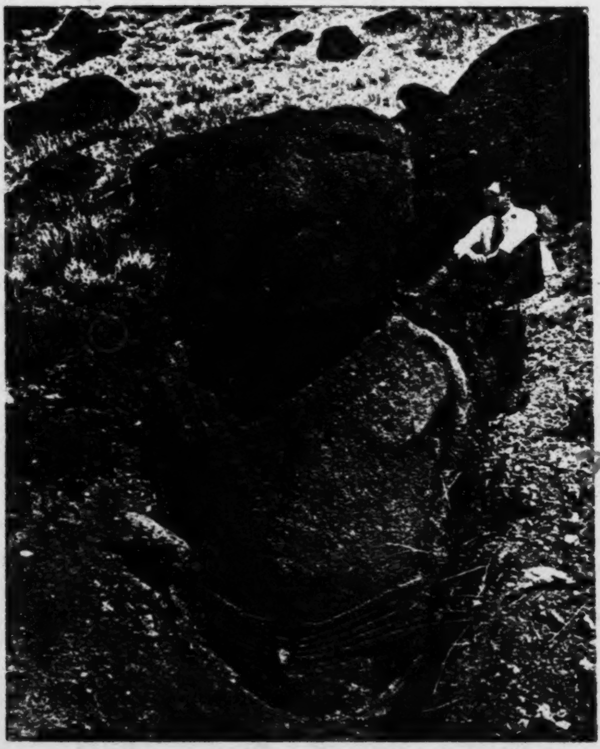


EXCAVATED STATUE

South-east side, Rano Raraku. Showing form of hands.

[Facing p. 192]

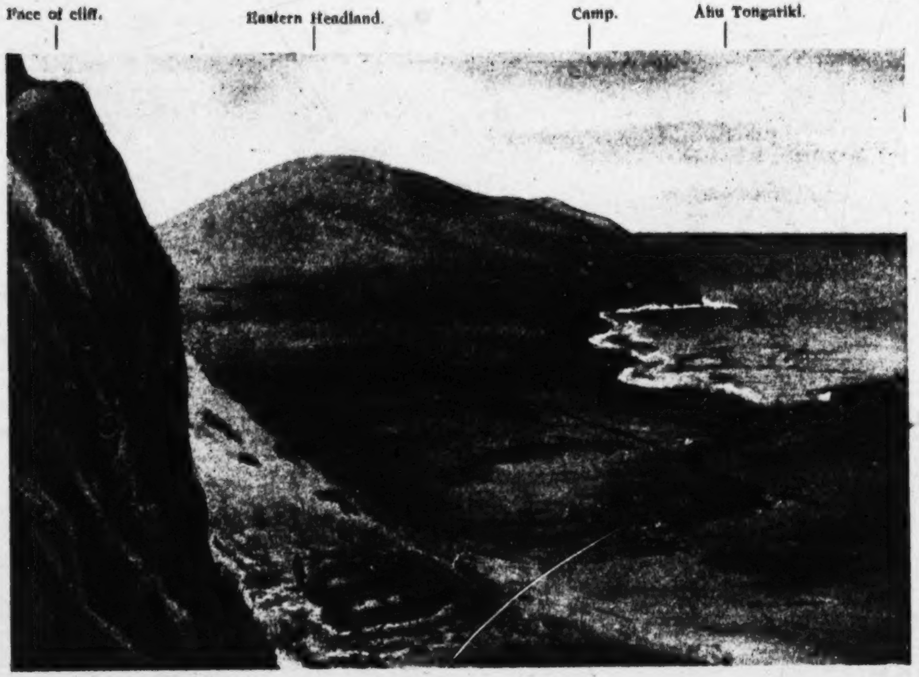
172 were in no case being hewn out of solid rock, but wrought into shape out of detached stones. On the whole, it is not probable that this portion was ever a quarry, in the same way as the western side and the interior of the crater. It is, of course, impossible to say what may be hidden beneath the detritus, but the lower part of the cliff is too soft a rock to be satisfactorily hewn, and the workmen appear simply to have seized on fragments which have fallen from above. "Here," they seem to have said, "is a good stone; let us turn it into a statue."

One day, when making a more thorough examination of the slope, our attention was excited by a small level plateau, about half-way up, from which protruded two similar pieces of stone next to one another. They were obviously giant noses of which the nostrils faced the cliff. Digging was bound to follow, but it proved a long business, as the figures it revealed were particularly massive and corpulent. Their position was horizontal, side by side, and the effect, more particularly when looking down at them from the cliff above, was of two great bodies lying in their graves (fig. 73). The thing was a mystery; they were certainly not in a quarry, but if they had once been erect, why had they faced the mountain, instead of conforming to the rule of having their back to it? Orientation could not account for it, as other statues on the same slope were differently placed. Then again, if they had once stood and then fallen, and in proof of this one head was broken off from the trunk, how did it come about that they were lying horizontally on a sloping hill-side? The upper part of the bodies had suffered somewhat from weather, and a small round basin, such as natives use for domestic purposes, had been hollowed out in one abdomen, but the hands were quite sharp and unweathered. We used to scramble up at off moments, and stand gazing down at them trying to read their history.

It became at last obvious they had once been set up with the lower part inserted in the ground to the usual level, and later been intentionally thrown down. For this purpose a level trench must have been cut through the sloping side of the hill at a depth corresponding to the base of the standing images, and into this the figures had fallen. While they lay in the trench with the upper part of the bodies exposed, one had been found a nice smooth stone for household use. A charcoal soil level showed clearly where the surface had been at this epoch, which

172
53a

FIG. 73.


Face of cliff.
Eastern Headland.
Camp.
Ahu Tongariki.

PROSTRATE STATUES, SOUTH-EAST SIDE, RANO RARAKU, AFTER EXCAVATION.

[facing p. 193]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

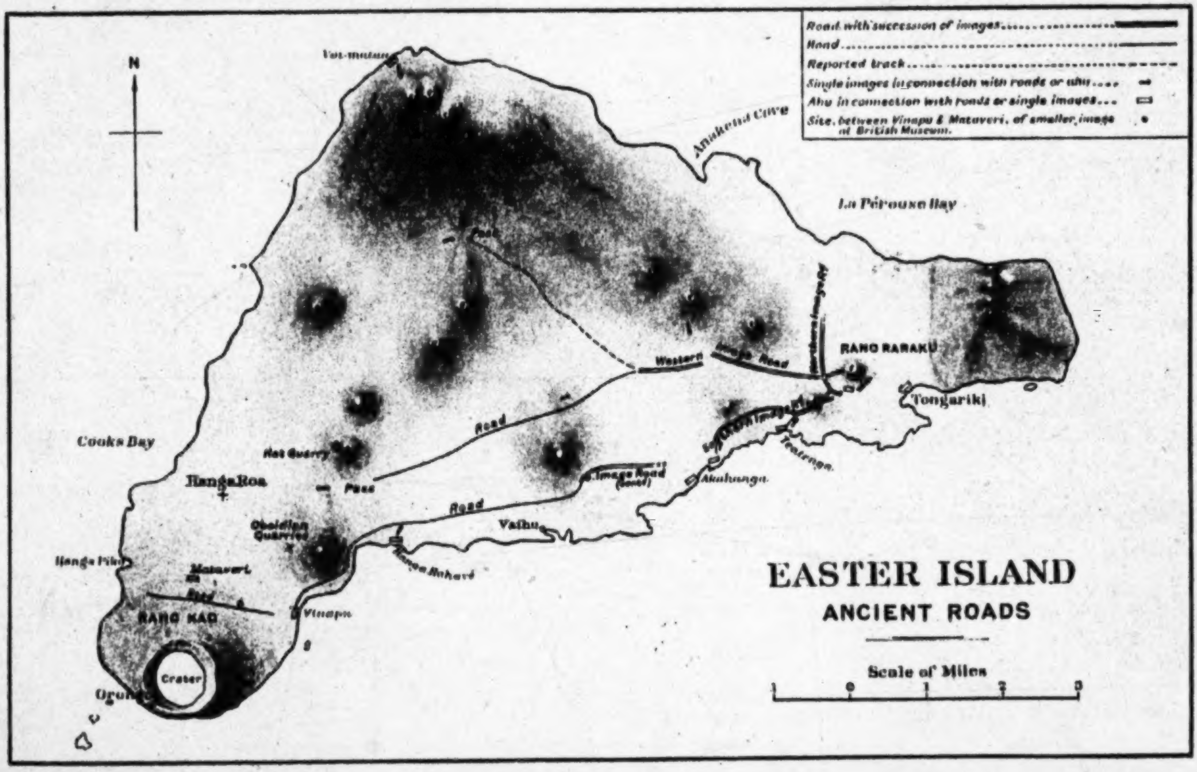
must have been comparatively recent, as an iron nail was found 172 in it. Finally, a descent of earth had covered all but the noses, leaving them in the condition in which we found them.

This, though a satisfactory explanation as far as it went, did not account for the fact that the figures were facing the mountain, and here for once tradition came to our help. [These images had, it was said, marked a boundary; the line of demarcation led between them, from the fissure in the cliff above right down to the middle statue in the great Tongariki terrace. To cross it was death; but as to what the boundary connoted no information was forthcoming; there seemed no great tribal division—the same clans ranged over the whole of the district. When, however, the line is followed through the crevice into the crater (fig. 47), it is found to form on both sides the boundary where the image-making ceased (no. 1 is a detached figure being brought down, not in a quarry), and was probably the line of taboo which preserved the rights of the image-makers. I was later given the cheering information that a certain "devil" frequented the site of my house, which was just on the image side [776] of the boundary, who particularly resented the presence of strangers, and was given to strangling them in the night. The spirits, who inhabit the crater, are still so unpleasant, that my Kanaka maid objected to taking clothes there to wash, even in daylight, till assured that our party would be working within call.

Isolated Statues.—The finished statues, as distinct from those in the quarries, have so far been spoken of under two heads, those which once adorned the ahu and those still standing on the slope of Raraku; there is, however, another class to consider, which, for want of a better name, will be termed the Isolated Statues. It has already been stated that, as Raraku is approached, a number of figures lie by the side of the modern track, others are round the base of the mountain, and yet other isolated specimens are scattered about the island. All these images are prostrate and lie on the surface of the ground, some on their backs and some on their faces. These were the ones which, according to legend, were being moved from the quarries to the ahu by the old lady when she stopped the work in her wrath; or, according to another account, quoted by a visitor before our day, "They walked, and some fell by the way."

102
491
no. 74.

[Facing P. 194]


Road with succession of images
Road
Reported track
Single images in connection with roads or ahu
Ahu in connection with roads or single images
Site, between Vinapu & Mataveri, of smaller image at British Museum.
N
Anakena Cove
La Pérouse Bay
RANO RARAKU
Tongariki
Western Image Road
Road
Cooks Bay
Hat Quarry
Hanga Roa
Pass
Image Road
Road
Vaihu
Akahanga
Obsidian Quarries
Hanga Piko
Mataveri
Road
RANO KAO
Vinapu
Crater
Orongo
EASTER ISLAND
ANCIENT ROADS
Scale of Miles
1
0
1
2
3

472
491

There must, we felt, have been roads along which they were taken, but for long we kept a look-out for such without success. At last a lazy Sunday afternoon ride, with no particular object, took one of us to the top of a small hill, some two miles to the west of Raraku. The level rays of the sinking sun showed up the inequalities of the ground, and, looking towards the sea, along the level plain of the south coast, the old track was clearly seen; it was slightly raised over lower ground and depressed somewhat through higher, and along it every few hundred yards lay a statue. Detailed study confirmed this first impression. At times over hard stony ground the trail was lost, but its main drift was indisputable; it was about nine feet or ten feet in width, the embankments were in places two feet above the surrounding ground, and the cuttings three feet deep. The road can be traced from the south-western corner of the mountain, with one or two gaps, nearly to the foot of Rano Kao, but the succession of statues continues only about half the distance. It generally runs some few hundred yards further inland than the present road, but a branch, with a statue, leads down to the ahu of Teatenga on the coast, and, another portion, either a branch or a detour of the main road, also with a statue, goes to the cove of Akahanga with its two large image ahu (fig. 32). There are on this road twenty-seven statues in all, covering a distance of some four miles, but fourteen of them, including two groups of three, are in the first mile. Their heights are from fifteen feet to over thirty feet, but generally over twenty feet.

As a clue had now been obtained, it was comparatively simple to trace two other roads from Raraku. One leads from the crater, and connects it with the western district of the island. It commences at the gap in the mountain wall, in the centre of which an image lies on its face with weird effect, as if descending head foremost into the plain; and runs for a while roughly parallel to the first road but about a mile further inland. It is not quite so regular as the south road, and is marked for a somewhat less distance by a sequence of images, some fourteen in number, which in the same way grow further apart as the distance from the mountain increases. When the succession of statues ceases, the road divides; one track turns to the north-west, and reaches the sea-board through a small

STATUES ON SOUTHERN ROAD.

FIG. 75.

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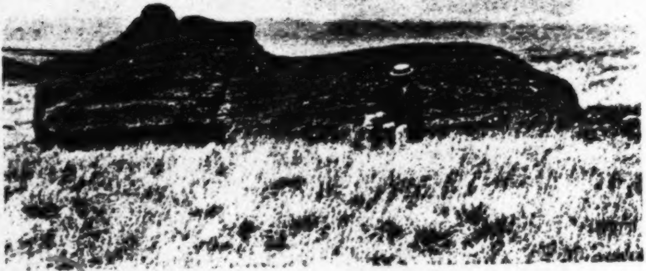
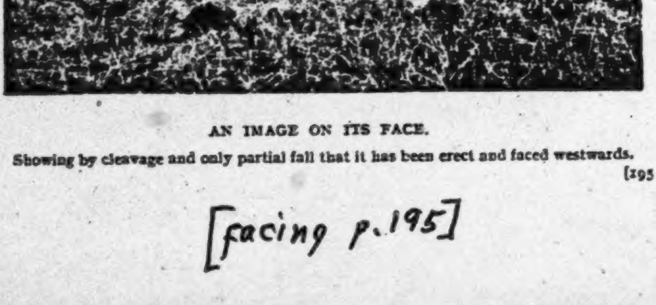


AN IMAGE ON ITS BACK.

Unbroken; if erect, would face westwards.

FIG. 76.



AN IMAGE ON ITS FACE.

Showing by cleavage and only partial fall that it has been erect and faced westwards.

[facing p. 195]

pass in the western line of cones; the other continues as far as a more southerly pass in the same succession of heights. In each pass there is a statue. 172 491

The third road, which runs from Raraku in a northerly direction, is much shorter than those to the south and west. It has only four statues covering a distance of perhaps a mile, and it then disappears; if, however, the figures round the base of the mountain belonged to it, and they lie in the same direction, it started from the southern corner of the mountain, led in front of the standing statues and across the trail from the crater, before taking its northward route up the eastern plain. The furthest of the images is the largest which has been moved; it lies on its back, badly broken, but the total of the fragments gives a height of thirty-six feet four inches. In addition to these three avenues, there are indications that some of the statues on the south-eastern side of Raraku may have been on a fourth road along that side beneath the cliff.

So far the matter was sufficiently clear, but another problem was still unsolved: if the images were really being moved to their respective ahu all round the coast, how was it that, with very few exceptions, they were all found in the neighbourhood of Raraku? If also they were being moved, what was the method pursued, for some lay on their backs and some on their faces? With the hope of elucidating this great question of the means of transport, we dug under and near one or two of the single figures without achieving our end—nothing was found; but the close study which the work necessitated called attention to the fact that on one of them the lines of weathering could not have been made with the figure in its present horizontal attitude. The rain had evidently collected on the head and run down the back; it must therefore have stood for a considerable time in a vertical position. It was again a noticeable fact that, though some single figures are lying unbroken (fig. 75), others, like the large one on the north road, proved to be so shattered that no amount of normal disintegration or shifting of soil could account for their condition—they had obviously fallen. So wedded, however, were we at this time to the theory that they were in course of transport, that it was seriously considered whether they could have been moved in an upright position. The point was settled by finding one day by the side of the track, some two miles from the 172 483 491

172 mountain, a partially buried head. This was excavated, and a
statue found that had been originally set up in a hole and, later,
483 undermined, causing it to fall forward. This was the only
instance of an isolated figure where the burial had been to any
491 depth, but in various other cases it was then seen that soil had
been removed from the base, and one or two more of the figures
had not quite fallen (fig. 76).

When the whole number of the statues on the roads were in imagination re-erected, it was found that they had all

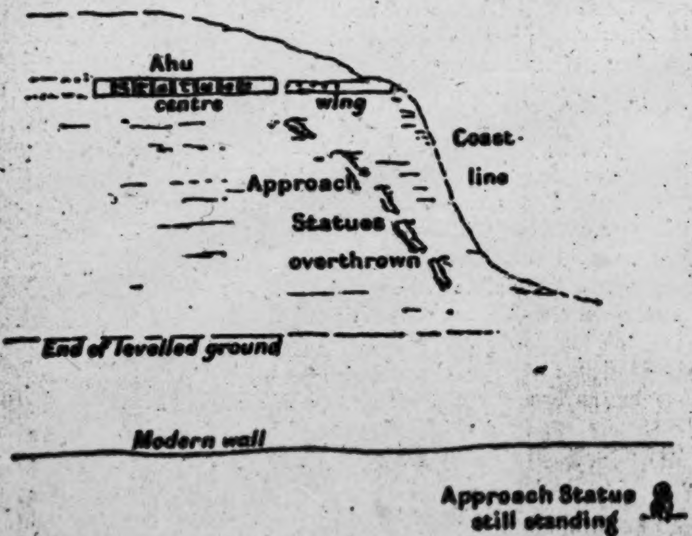


FIG. 77.—DIAGRAM SHOWING CEREMONIAL AVENUE OF AHU HANGA PAUKURA.

originally stood with their backs to the hill. Rano Raraku was, therefore, approached by at least three magnificent avenues, on each of which the pilgrim was greeted at intervals by a stone giant guarding the way to the sacred mountain (map of roads). One of the ahu on the south coast, Hanga Paukura, has been approached by a similar avenue of five statues facing the visitor. These five images when first seen were a great puzzle, as some of them are so embedded in the earth that their backs are even with the levelled sward in front of the ahu; later

FIG. 78.

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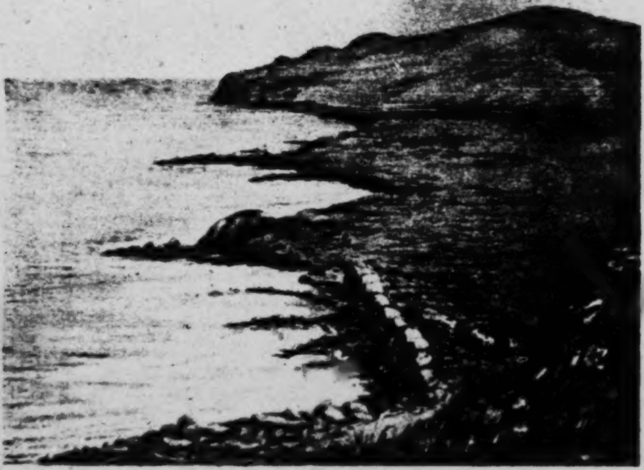

AHU PARO,
With image which was the last to be overthrown.

Foreground.—Hillock, traditionally utilised for placing the crown in position.
Distance.—Eastern Headland, with three cones, from which Spanish sovereignty was proclaimed in 1770.

[facing p. 197]

there seemed little doubt that, like the two giants on the south-east side of Raraku, trenches had been dug into which they had fallen. Subsequently, a sixth statue was discovered, the other side of a modern wall, weathered and worn away, but of Raraku stone and still upright. This is the only instance of an erect figure to be found elsewhere than on the mountain (fig. 77). 172 483 491

In addition to the images which have stood in these processional roads, there are, excluding one or two figures near the mountain whose *raison d'être* is somewhat doubtful, fourteen isolated statues in various parts of the island, for whose position no certain reason could be found. Some of these may have belonged to inland ahu which have disappeared, or they may be solitary memorials to mark some particular spots, but the greater number appear to have stood near tracks of some sort. Some of these last may have been boundary stones, and in this class may perhaps fall the smaller statue now at the British Museum, which is a very inferior specimen. According to local information it stood almost half-way on the track leading from Vinapu to Mataveri along the bottom of Rano Kao; the hole from which it was dug was pointed out, and our informant declared that he remembered it standing, and that the people used to dance round it. The larger figure at the British Museum was in a unique position, which will be spoken of later.

No statues were, therefore, found of which it could be said that they were in process of being removed, and the mode of transport remains a mystery. An image could be moved down from the quarry by means of banks of earth, and though requiring labour and skill, the process is not inconceivable. Similarly, the figures may have been, and probably were, erected on the terraces in the same way, being hauled up on an embankment of earth made higher than the pedestals and then dropped on them. Near Paro, the ahu where the last statue was overthrown, there is a hillock, and tradition says that a causeway was made from it to the head of the tall figure which stood upon the ahu, and along this the hat was rolled (fig. 78)—a piece of lore which seems hardly likely to have been invented by a race having no connection with the statues. But the problem remains, how was the transport carried out along the level? The weight of some amounted to as much as 40 or 50 tons. It would simplify matters very much if there were any reason to suppose that the 172 483

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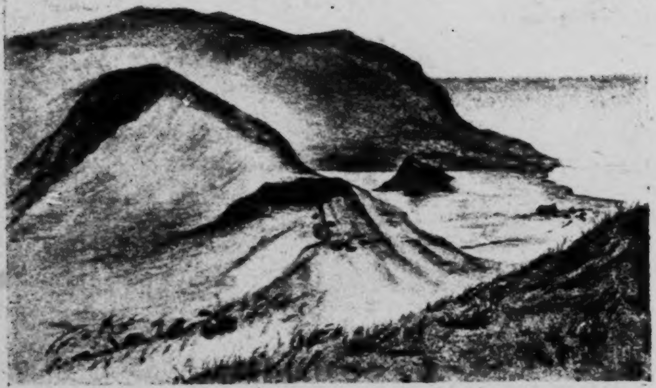
FIG 79.



THE CRATER FROM WHICH THE HATS OF THE IMAGES WERE HEWN, ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL PUNAPAU.

Rano Kao in the distance.

[facing p. 198]

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images were moved, as was the case with the hats, before being wrought, merely as cylinders of stone, in which case it would be possible to pass a rope under and over it, thus parbuckling the stone or rolling it along, but the evidence is all to the contrary. There is no trace whatever of an unfinished image on or near an ahu, while, as we have seen, they are found at all stages in the quarry. Presumably rollers were employed, but there appears never to have been much wood, or material for cordage, in the island, and it is not easy to see how sufficient men could bring strength to bear on the block. Even if the ceremonial roads were used when possible, these fragile figures have been taken to many distant ahu, up hill and down dale, over rough and stony ground, where there is no trace of any road at all.

The natives are sometimes prepared to state that the statues were thrown down by human means, they never have any doubt that they were moved by supernatural power. We were once inspecting an ahu built on a natural eminence, one side was sheer cliff, the other was a slope of 29 feet, as steep as a house roof, near the top a statue was lying. The most intelligent of our guides turned to me significantly. "Do you mean to tell me," he said, "that that was not done by *mana*?" The darkness is not rendered less tantalising by the reflection that could centuries roll away and the old scenes be again enacted before us, the workers would doubtless exclaim in bewildered surprise at our ignorance, "But how could you do it any other way?"

172
491
Besides the ceremonial roads and their continuations, there are traces of an altogether different track which is said to run round the whole seaboard of the island. It is considered to be supernatural work, and is known as Ara Mahiva, "ara" meaning road and "Mahiva" being the name of the spirit or deity who made it. On the southern side it has been obliterated in making the present track—it was there termed the "path for carrying fish"; but on the northern and western coasts, where for much of the way it runs on the top of high cliffs, such a use is out of the question. It can be frequently seen there like a long persistent furrow, and where its course has been interrupted by erosion, no fresh track had been made further inland; it terminates suddenly on the broken edge, and resumes its course on the other side. It is best seen in certain lights running up both the western

FIG. 80.

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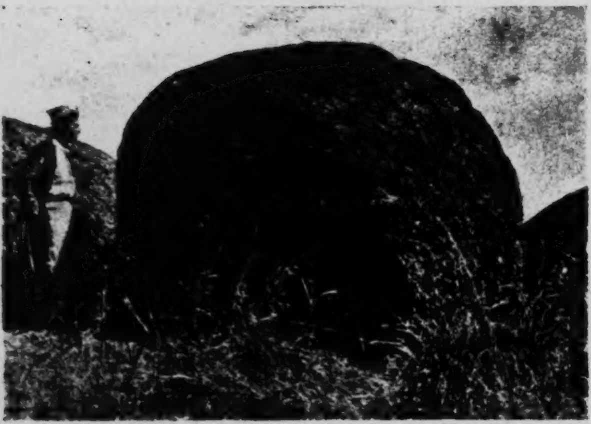
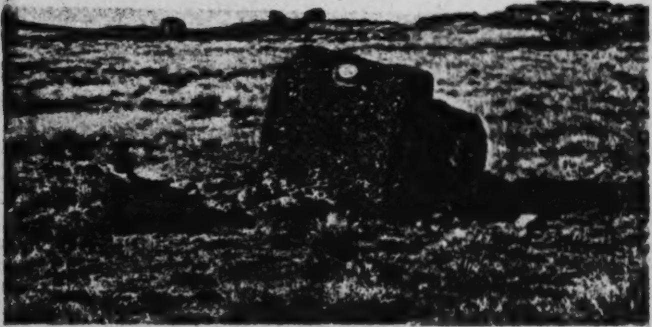


AN UNFINISHED HAT NEAR THE QUARRY.

FIG. 81.



A FINISHED HAT AT AHU HANGA O-ORNU; OTHERS IN THE DISTANCE.

[facing p. 199]

and southern edges of Rano Kao. Its extent and regularity appeared to preclude the idea of landslip. There is no reason to suppose that it is due to the imported livestock, and it has no connection with ahu, or the old native centres of population, yet to have been so worn by naked feet it must constantly have been used. This silent witness to a forgotten past is one of the most mysterious and impressive things on the island. 172 491

Stone Crowns of the Images

Mention must finally be made of the crowns or hats which adorned the figures on the ahu. Their full designation is said to be "Hau (hats) hiterau moai," but they are always alluded to merely as "hiterau" or "hitirau." 172 532

These coverings for the head were cylindrical in form, the bottom being slightly hollowed out into an oval depression in order to fit on to the head of the image; the depression was not in the centre, but left a larger margin in front, so that the brim projected over the eyes of the figure, a fashion common in native head-dresses. They are said by the present inhabitants to have been kept in place by being wedged with white stones. The top was worked into a boss or knot. The material is a red volcanic tuff found in a small crater on the side of a larger volcano, generally known as Punapau, not far from Cook's Bay (fig. 79). In the crater itself are the old quarries. A few half-buried hats may be seen there, and the path up to it, and for some hundreds of yards from the foot of the mountain, is strewn with them. They are at this stage simply large cylinders, from 4 feet to 8 feet high, from 6 feet to 9 feet across (fig. 80), and they were obviously conveyed to the ahu in this form and there carved into shape (fig. 81). An unwrought cylinder is still lying at a hundred yards from the ahu of Anakena. The finished hats are not more than 3 feet 10 inches to 6 feet in height, with addition of 6 inches to 2 feet for the knob; the measurement across the crown is from about 5 feet 6 inches to 8 feet. The stone is more easily broken and cut than that of the statues, and while many crowns survive, many more have been smashed in falling or used as building materials.

It is a noteworthy fact that the images on Raraku never had hats, nor have any of the isolated statues; they were confined to those on the ahu.

CHAPTER XV

NATIVE CULTURE IN PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES

Sources of Information: History, Recent Remains, Living Memory—*Mode of Life:* Habitations, Food, Dress and Ornament—*Social Life:* Divisions, Wars, Marriages, Burial Customs, Social Functions.

114 It has been seen that any knowledge which exists on the island
with regard to the origin of the monuments is of the most vague
127 description, and it is therefore necessary, in the attempt to solve
the problem, to rely principally on indirect evidence. It becomes
in particular essential to collect all possible information about
the present people; not only for its intrinsic anthropological
interest, but in order to find if any links connect them with the
great builders, or if we must look for an earlier race.

As a first step in the search the scientist naturally turns to
the most ancient accounts which he can find describing the
island, its inhabitants, and remains; these are not yet two
hundred years old. The first European to see it was a Dutch
Admiral named Roggeveen, who came upon it on Easter Day,
1722, during his search for another and mysterious island known
as Davis or David's Island.[1] He concluded that it was not the
place for which he was looking, christened it Easter Island, and
went further afield. His ship lay off the north side of the
island for a week, but only on one day did landing take place,
and one or two of the party have left us short descriptions.
[137] There were, they say, no big trees, but it had a rich soil and good
241 climate; there were sugar-cane, bananas, potatoes and figs, and
the natives brought them a number of fowls, estimated varyingly
from sixty to five hundred.

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[1] An island was reported in lat. 27° by an English buccaneer named Davis in 1687. It was, he said, five hundred miles from the coast of Chile, low and sandy, and some twelve leagues to the west of it was seen "a long tract of pretty high land." The description in no way applies to Easter, with which it has sometimes been identified. The probability seems to be that Davis was out of his reckoning, as was by no means unusual in the case of the early mariners, and it has been suggested that the island he saw was Crescent Island, the high ground in the distance being the Gambier group. The latitude of Easter Island is 27° 8′ S., that of Crescent Island is 23° 20′ S.

from sixty to five hundred. One of the voyagers goes so far as 241
to say that "all the country was under cultivation." As for the
inhabitants, they were, they tell us, of all shades of colour,
yellow, white, and brown, and wore clothes made of a "field
product," evidently tapa. They were "painted," which apparently 142
signifies tattooed, and it was the habit to distend the 304
lobes of their ears so that they hung to the shoulders, and large [291]
discs were worn in them. "When these Indians," wrote Roggeveen,
"go about any job which might set their ear-plugs
wagging, and bid fair to do them any hurt, they take them out
and hitch the rim of the lobe up over the top of the ear, which
gives them a quaint and laughable appearance."[1]

The natives were extraordinarily thievish, stealing the caps from 648
the seamen's heads, while one actually climbed into the port-hole
of the cabin and took the cloth off the table. These habits gave
rise to an unfortunate incident, as when the visitors came on
shore, a scuffle took place over the sanctity of property, and the
natives began throwing stones, on which a petty official gave the
order to fire, ten or twelve natives being killed. The occurrence,
however, was duly explained, and did not terminate amicable
relations. We learn that at this time the great statues, of which 532
this is of course the first report, were then, as has already been 782
noted, standing and in place. The Dutchmen describe them as
"remarkable, tall, stone figures, a good 30 feet in height," and
notice that they have crowns on their heads; a clear space was,
they said, reserved round them by laying stones. They have
no doubt that the figures are objects of worship; the natives
"kindle fires in front of them, and thereafter squatting on their
heels with heads bowed down, they bring the palms of their
hands together and alternately raise and lower them." Another
observer adds, in connection with this worship, that they "prostrated
themselves towards the rising sun." A great step would
have been gained towards the solution of the problem if we could
feel assured that these last remarks were justified and were not
merely the result of imperfect observation.[2]

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[1] Precisely the same habit obtains to-day among the Akikuya in East Africa. [171]

[2] For Roggeveen's description of the Island see *Voyage of Gonzalez*. Hakluyt Society, Series II., vol. xiii., pp. 1 to 26.

A statement of the evidence *re* Davis Island is given in the introduction to the same volume.

114 For fifty years darkness once more descends on the history
of the island. Then, within a period of sixteen years, it was
127 visited by three expeditions, Spanish, English, and French
respectively. The Spanish were under the command of Gonzalez.[1] They too were searching for David's Island when, in 1770,
they touched at Easter, and they also came to the conclusion
that it was not their goal. They took, however, formal possession of it, and named it San Carlos. Their ships lay at anchor
in the same place as had those of Roggeveen, the bay on the
north coast now called after La Pérouse. From this anchorage
three curious hillocks on the northern slope of the great eastern
volcano form striking objects (fig. 78); on each of these they
planted a cross, and proclaimed the King of Spain with banners
flying, beating of drums, and artillery salutes. The natives
appear to have thoroughly enjoyed the proceedings, and
"confirmed them," according to the solemn statements of the
[212] Spaniards, by marking the official document with their own script.
This is the first that we hear of a form of native writing. The
expedition sent a boat round the island, which made a very creditable map of it.

Four years later Cook cast anchor on the west side in the bay which is known by his name. He was there three days and did not himself explore inland, but his officers did so, including the elder Forster, the botanist of the expedition, and his account of what they saw was published by his son.[2]

In 1780 La Pérouse anchored in the same place, and also sent some of his men inland, who covered partly, but not entirely, the same districts as those of Cook.[3]

As these expeditions were so nearly of the same date, their
remarks may fairly be compared and contrasted with those made
by Roggeveen half a century earlier. All three give very similar
descriptions of the people, their appearance and dwellings, which
142 also resemble the accounts of the Dutch. Cook is very much
impressed with the long ears, though La Pérouse does not refer
000 to them. There is the same story of the native powers of ap-

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[1] *Voyage of Gonzalez*, p. 27 *seq.*

[2] *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World*, by James Cook, 1st ed., 4to, 1777, pp. 276–96.

A Voyage Round the World, George Forster, 4to, 1777. Vol. i., pp. 551–602.

[3] *Voyage de La Pérouse autour du Monde*. 4to edn., London, 1799. Vol. i., pp. 319–36.

There is the same story of the native powers of ap-
propriating the goods of the strangers. Cook says that they
were "as expert thieves as any we had yet met with," and 648
Pérouse, whose own hat they stole while helping him down one
of the image platforms, is particularly aggrieved at such con-
duct, considering that he has given them sheep, goats, pigs, and
other valuable presents; peace was only kept between the crew
and the natives by official compensation being given the seamen
for their lost property.

Here, however, the resemblance of these accounts with that 241
of Roggeveen ends. The descriptions which are given by these
later expeditions of the state of the country, and its facilities
as a port of call, are very different from those of the Dutchmen.
The Spaniards speak of it as being uncultivated save for some
small plots of ground. The Englishmen are the reverse of
enthusiastic. Forster calls it a "poor land," and Cook says that
" no nation need contend for the honour of the discovery of this
island, as there can be few places which afford less convenience
for shipping." "Poultry" now consists of only a "few tame [231]
fowls"—later still we find that only one is produced. Pérouse,
although he is not so depressed as Cook, tells us that only one-
tenth of the land is cultivated. With regard to the population
Roggeveen gives no number, and probably was not in a position
to do so. The estimates made by the Spanish and English are 161
very similar. Gonzalez puts it at nine hundred to one thousand,
Cook at seven hundred; both of them, however, state that the
number of women seen seemed to be disproportionately small.
La Pérouse, writing of course some years later, speaks of the
number as two thousand and has seen many women and children. [197]
Both English and French are interested to find that the language
is similar to that spoken elsewhere in the Pacific.

Again, in dealing with the state of the monuments and the 532
way in which they were regarded, the impressions of the later
observers differ greatly from those of Roggeveen. The Spaniards
do not tell us very much. They saw from the sea what they
thought were bushes symmetrically put up on the beach, and
dotted about inland; later they found that they were in reality
statues, and they wondered particularly how their crowns, which
they observed were of a different material, were raised into place.
It was one of the Spanish officers who states, as recorded at the
beginning of this book, that the seashore was lined with stone

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 82.

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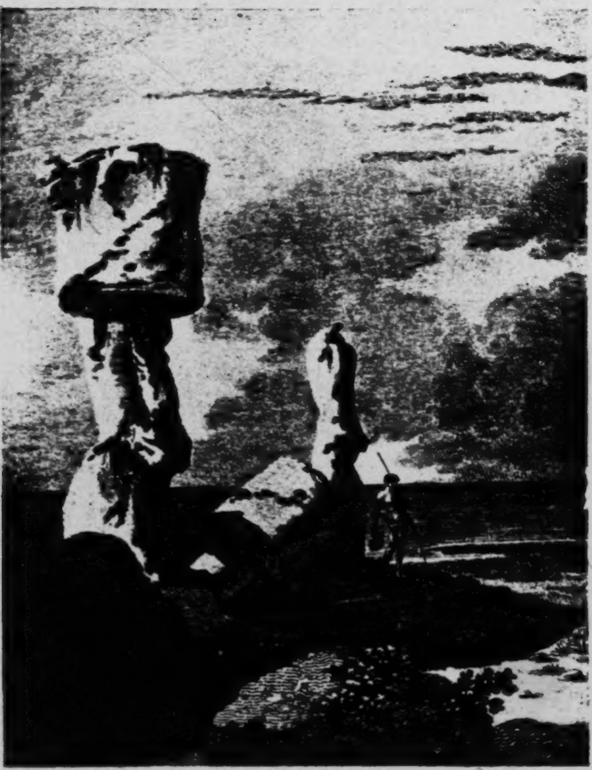

[*Drawn from Nature by W. Hodges.*

MONUMENTS IN EASTER ISLAND.

From *A Voyage Towards the South Pole*, James Cook, 1777, vol. i., part of pl. xlix.

The artist has not observed the features or arms of the images, nor that they stand on stone platforms. The hats, as shown, greatly exceed their true proportion to the figures. The picture has probably been redrawn from memory.

[facing 204]

532 idols,[1] from which it may be gathered that the great majority
were still erect. The figures were, they tell us, all set up on
[764] small stones, and burying-places were in front. It is interesting,
in view of what we know of the prohibition of smoke near the
784 ahu,[2] to find one of the Spanish writing: "They could not bear
us to smoke cigars; they begged our sailors to extinguish them,
and they did so. I asked one of them the reason, and he made
signs that the smoke went upwards; but I do not know what
this meant."[3] Cook's people observed that the natives disliked
these burying-places being walked over, but whereas Roggeveen
was convinced, whether rightly or wrongly, that the cult of the
statues was what we should call "a going concern," Cook, fifty
778 years later, is equally certain that it is a thing of the past; some
of the figures are still standing, but some are fallen down, and the
inhabitants "do not even trouble to repair the foundations of
those which are going to decay." "The giant statues," he says,
"are not in my opinion looked upon as idols by the present
inhabitants, whatever they may have been in the days of the
Dutch." Forster also remarks that "they are so disproportionate
to the strength of the nation, it is most reasonable to
look upon them as the remains of better times." La Pérouse
does not agree with this last sentiment; he admits that at
present the monuments are not respected, but he sees no reason
why they should not still be made even under existing conditions;
he thinks that a hundred people would be sufficient to put one
of the statues in place. The objection he sees is that the people
have no chief great enough to secure such a memorial. It is
unfortunate that the mountain of Rano Raraku is so far removed
from both the north and west anchorages, that none of the
voyagers discovered it, although Cook's men were very near
that from which the crowns were obtained.

127 In the nineteenth century we have a few accounts from passing
[304] voyagers. Lisiansky, in 1804, found no people with long ears,[4]
but in 1825 Beechey in H.M.S. *Blossom* says that there were
532 still a few to be seen. With regard to the statues, the process of

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[1] MS. copy in the British Museum of a letter sent by one of the officers of the Spanish ship to a Canon or a Prebendary in Buenos Aires. MSS. 17607 (18). Our attention was drawn to this document by Dr. Corney.

[2] See above, p. 171.

[3] *Voyage of Gonzalez*, p. 126.

[4] *Voyage Round the World in the Ship "Neva,"* Lisiansky, Lond. 1814, p. 58.

demolition has gone so far that Beechey declares "the existence of any busts is doubtful."[1] It is amusing to find, a hundred years after Roggeveen's similar experience, that the *Blossom* has an affray with natives over the stealing of caps. While attention has been drawn to the importance of these early narratives, it must be remembered that all the visits were of very short duration, and that the old voyagers were not trained observers. The Dutchmen, for instance, deliberately tell us that the statues have no arms. The accounts frequently give the impression of being written up afterwards from somewhat vague recollection, and in most cases the narrators have read those of their predecessors and go prepared to see certain things. One navigator who never landed assures us that the houses are the same as in the days of La Pérouse. On the other hand, with regard to the stores available, they are, so to speak, on their own quarter-deck, and their remarks can be accepted without question. 532 648 114

In the "sixties" of last century the great series of changes took place which brought Easter Island into touch with the modern world. The first of these largely broke those chains with the past which the archæologist now seeks to reconstruct. Labour was needed by the exploiters of the Peruvian guano fields, and an attempt which was made to introduce it from China having failed, slave-raids were organised in the South Sea Islands. As early as 1805 Easter had suffered similarly at the hands of American sealers, and it was amongst the principal islands to be laid under contribution in December 1862. 648 177

It is pathetic even now to hear the old men describe the scenes which they witnessed in their youth, illustrating by action how the raiders threw down on the ground gifts which they thought likely to attract the inhabitants, and, when the islanders were on their knees scrambling for them, tied their hands behind their backs and carried them off to the waiting ship. The natives say that one thousand in all were so removed from the island, and, unfortunately, there were amongst them some of the principal men, including many of the most learned, and the last of the ariki, or chiefs. Representations were made by the French Minister at Lima, and a certain number were put on board ship to be returned to their home. Smallpox, however, had been contracted by them, and out of one hundred who were [164 173]

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[1] *Voyage to the Pacific, H.M.S. "Blossom,"* p. 41.

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648 to be repatriated, only fifteen survived. These, on their return
164 to the island, brought the disease with them, which spread
731 rapidly with most fatal results to the population.

Meantime, shortly before the raid, the attention of the Roman
797 Catholic "Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary" in Valparaiso had been drawn to the island by the account received from a passing ship, and they determined to inaugurate a mission. Three of the Community left for Easter Island, their route taking them by way of Tahiti. Finally, only one continued, Eugène Eyraud, who landed on the island in January 1864. Eyraud was a lay brother in the Order, having been a merchant in South America; he devoted his life to the call to take the Gospel to Easter, and the accounts of his work, which are extraordinarily interesting, leave a great impression of his courage and devotion.[1] He was alone on the island for eight or nine months, and was at the mercy of the natives, who stole his belongings, even to the clothes he was wearing, and compelled him to make a boat for them. In March 1866, Eyraud, after a visit to Chile, returned with another missionary, Father Roussel, and the two were for a while blockaded in a house which they had put up, but the tide now turned. Either Roussel was a man of greater determination than Eyraud, or with increased numbers a firmer attitude was possible. Surgeon Palmer of H.M.S. *Topaze* tells us that when one of the natives took up a stone with a menacing gesture, Roussel quietly felled him with his stick and went on his way, after which there was no further trouble. The missionaries were joined later in the year by two more of their number, and became a power in the land.

Eyraud on his return from Chile was suffering from phthisis, of which he died in August 1868. When he was nearing his end he asked Roussel if there still remained any heathen in the island, to which the Father replied "not one"; the last seven had been baptized on the Feast of the Assumption. It seems
164 natural to connect with Eyraud's illness the fact that there was
753 at the same time a severe epidemic of phthisis in the island; so
731 little was the need of precaution understood at this date, that
even Surgeon Palmer, writing of the inroads made by consumption, remarks "which they (the natives) believe infectious."[2]

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[1] See *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, 1866, 1867, 1869.

[2] *Journal Ethnological Society*, Vol. i. p. 373.

The ravages of this disease, following on those of smallpox, 797
reduced the population, which at the time of the arrival of the [731
mission had stood at twelve hundred, by about one-fourth. 764]

The remarks of the missionaries on native customs, particularly those dealing with their ceremonies, reflect credit on the ob- 114
servers at a time when such things were too often thought beneath notice; they will be referred to later. Their ethnological work was, however, limited by more pressing exigencies, by the difficulties of locomotion on the island, and by the language. Roussel compiled a vocabulary, which is useful to students, though not free from the mode of thought found in a well-known missionary dictionary, which translates hansom cab into the Swahili language. [788] It is a curious fact that so completely were the terraces now ruined that the Fathers never allude to the statues, and seem scarcely to have realised their existence; but it is through them that we first hear of the wooden tablets 212
carved with figures. The body of professors acquainted with this art of writing perished, either in Peru or by epidemic, and this, in connection with the introduction of Christianity, led to great destruction of the existing specimens of this most interesting script. The natives said that they burnt the tablets in compliance with the orders of the missionaries, though such suggestion would hardly be needed in a country where wood is scarce; the Fathers, on the contrary, state that it was due to them that any were preserved. Some certainly were saved by their means and through the interest shown in them by Bishop Jaussen of Tahiti, while two or three found their way to museums after the natives became aware of their value; but some or all of these existing tablets are merely fragments of the original. The natives told us that an expert living on the south coast, whose house had been full of such glyphs, abandoned them at the call of the missionaries, on which a man named Niari, being of a practical mind, got hold of the discarded tablets and made a boat of them wherein he caught much fish. When the "sewing came out," he stowed the wood into a cave at an ahu near Hanga Roa, to be made later into a new vessel there. Pakarati, an islander now living, found a piece, and it was acquired by the U.S.A. ship *Mohican*.

Side by side with the establishment of the religious power the 648
secular had come into being. The master of the ship who had

648 brought the last two missionaries was a certain Captain Dutrou Bornier. He had been attracted by the place, and, having made financial arrangements with the mercantile house of Brander in Tahiti, settled himself on the island and proceeded to exploit it commercially. Title-deeds were obtained from the natives in exchange for gifts of woven material. The remaining population was gathered together into one settlement at Hanga Roa, the native name for the shore of Cook's Bay. This was the state of things when H.M.S. *Topaze* touched in 1868 and carried off the two statues now at the British Museum.

Dutrou Bornier had at first spoken enthusiastically of the work of the missionaries; later, however, the not unknown struggle arose between the religious and secular powers. According to the accounts of the missionaries, they protested against the actions of Bornier in taking over two hundred natives, practically by force, and shipping them to Tahiti to work on the Brander plantations. Bornier retaliated by rendering their position impossible, and the Fathers ultimately received orders to transfer their labours to the Gambier islands. Jaussen tells us that their converts desired to accompany them, and that almost the whole population went on board with them. The captain, however, instigated by Bornier, refused to carry so many, and one hundred
[161] and seventy-five were sent back to the shore. This, therefore, "was the whole population" in 1871. We have not Bornier's account of the quarrel, but there seems to have been some justification for the attitude of the missionaries towards him, as five years later he was murdered by the natives, and, if current stories are to be believed, his end was well merited.

114 Subsequently one of the Branders lived at Mataveri, and Mr. Alexander Salmon, to whom the missionaries sold their interests, at Vaihu on the south coast.[1] The Salmon family had intermarried with the royal family of Tahiti, and the new resident was well aware of the value of antiquities. According to native accounts he organised a band to search the caves and hiding-places for articles of interest. They also state that he employed skilled natives to produce wooden objects connected with their older culture for sale to passing ships. He spoke the

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[1] The above statement is made on the authority of Mr. John Brander of Tahiti. According to report of H.M.S. *Sappho*, which visited the island in 1882, Salmon was then an agent of the Maison Brander.

language of the island, and when the U.S.S. *Mohican* arrived 114 in 1886, he was the source of much of the information which they subsequently published. It is an important but difficult matter to know how far the material thus gleaned thirty years ago was carefully obtained and reproduced. One or two of the folk-tales are still told very much as retailed by Salmon, but he appears to have taken little interest in the surviving customs and failed to understand them. The report of the *Mohican*, made by Paymaster Thomson, has been the only account of the island in existence with any pretention to scientific value.[1] The *Mohican* was there eleven days, and Thomson went rapidly round the island with a party from the ship. The amount of ground covered and work done is remarkable, although his statements are naturally not free from the errors inseparable from such rapid observation.

In 1888 the Chilean Government formally took possession. In 1897 M. Merlet, of Valparaiso, purchased from the representatives of Brander, Bornier, and Salmon, their interest in Easter Island, with the exception of a tract of land containing the village of Hanga Roa, which the Chilean Government acquired from the missionaries and retained in the interest of the inhabitants; this land covers a far larger space than the natives are able to utilise. The population is again increasing, as will have 161 been seen from the fact that during our visit they numbered two hundred and fifty. M. Merlet subsequently sold his holding to a company, of which he became chairman.

Easter Island has had many names. That given by the Dutch- 101 man has become generally accepted, but the Spaniards christened it San Carlos, and in some maps it is termed "Waihu," a name of a part of the island erroneously understood as applying to the whole. A native name is Te Pito-te-henua, "*henua*" means usually "earth" and "*pito*" "navel."[2] Thomson says it was ascribed to the first comers. Elsewhere in the Pacific "*pito*" also means "end." Churchill holds the name signified simply "Land's End," and was applied to all these angles of the island, which was itself without a name.[3] Rapa-nui (or Great Rapa) is another native name for which various explanations are offered.

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[1] *Smithsonian Report*, 1889.

[2] In the *Odyssey* Athene speaks of Odysseus as "in a sea-girt isle, where is the navel of the sea." (*Odyssey*, Bk. I., l. 50, Butcher & Lang.)

[3] *Easter Island, The Rapa-nui Speech.* W. Churchill, p. 3.

101 The island of Rapa, sometimes known as Rapa-iti, lies some two thousand miles to the westward. Thomson states that the name Rapa-nui only dates from the time when the men kidnapped by the Peruvians were being returned to their homes. The Easter Islanders, finding no one knew the name Te Pito-te-henua, and that some comrades in distress from the other Rapa managed to make their place of origin understood, called their own home Rapa-nui; a story which sounds hardly probable, but was presumably obtained from Salmon.

According to the report of H.M.S. *Topaze*, the Islanders of their day believed that Rapa was their original home. Others state the name was given by a visitor from that island.

114 The brief accounts which have been referred to are all that is known from external evidence of the original life of the present people, and but little hope was held out to us in England that those fragments could still be supplemented. There were found, however, to be still in existence two possible sources of information, namely, the memories of old inhabitants, and the actual traces which still remain of the life led by the people previous to the Peruvian raid and the coming of Christianity. The great ahu which have so far been described are only a part, although the most imposing portion, of the stone remains of the island. It is fortunate for the student that when civilisation appeared the natives were gathered into one settlement, for they left behind them, sprinkled over the island, various erections connected with their original domestic life. These buildings were certainly being used in recent times, and are treated from this point of view, but for all we know they may have been, and very possibly were, contemporary with the great works.

The study of the remains on the island, from the greatest to the least, is by no means so simple as may hitherto have appeared. Our earliest attempts at descriptions, although conscientious, were almost ludicrous in the light of subsequent knowledge, and Captain Beechey's error on the subject of "the busts" is at least comprehensible. Easter, it must be remembered, is a mass of disintegrating rocks. When in an idle moment the Expedition amused itself by inventing an heraldic design for the island, it was universally agreed that the main emblem must undoubtedly be a "stone," "and as supporters," suggested one frivolous member, "two cockroaches rampant." The most correct representation would be a stone vertical on a stone horizontal. 114 Every individual who has lived, even temporarily, in the place, has collected stones and put them up according to taste; and every succeeding generation, also needing stones, has, as in the instance of the manager's wall, found them most readily in ruining or converting the work of their predecessors. Even when a building is comparatively intact, the original design and purpose can only be grasped by experience, and matters become distinctly complicated when the walls of an ahu have been made into a garden enclosure and a chicken-house turned into an ossuary. It must be remembered also that rough stone buildings bear in themselves no marks of age. The cairns put up by us to mark the distances for rifle fire from the camp were indistinguishable from those of prehistoric nature made for a very different purpose. The result is that the tumble-down remains of yesterday, and the scenes of unknown antiquity blend together in a confusing whole in which it is not always easy to distinguish even the works of nature from those of man.

The other source of information which was open to us was the 124 memory of the old people. If but little was known of the great works, it was possible that there might still linger knowledge of customs or folk-lore which would throw indirect light on origins. This field proved to be astonishingly large, but it was even more difficult to collect facts from brains than out of stones. On our arrival there were still a few old people who were sufficiently grown up in the sixties to recall something of the old life; with the great majority of these, about a dozen in number, we gradually got in touch, beginning with those who worked for Mr. Edmunds and hearing from them of others. It was momentous work, for the eleventh hour was striking, day by day they were dropping off; it was a matter of anxious consideration whose testimony should first be recorded for fear that, meanwhile, others should be gathered to their fathers, and their store of knowledge lost for ever. Against the longer recollection of extreme old age, had to be put the fact that the memories of those a little younger were generally more clear and accurate. The feeling of responsibility from a scientific point of view was very great. Ten years ago more could have been done; ten years hence little or nothing will remain of this source of knowledge.

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FIG. 83.

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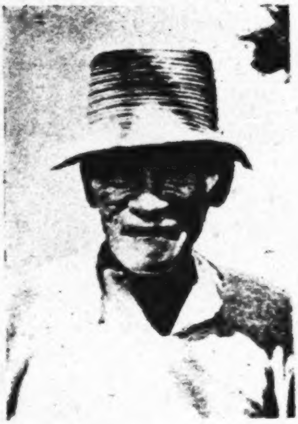
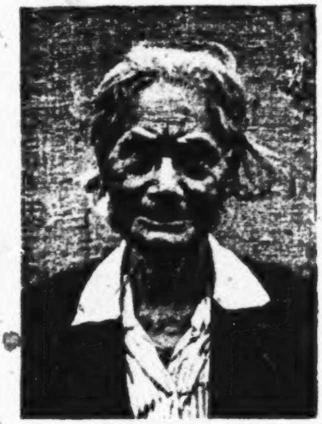
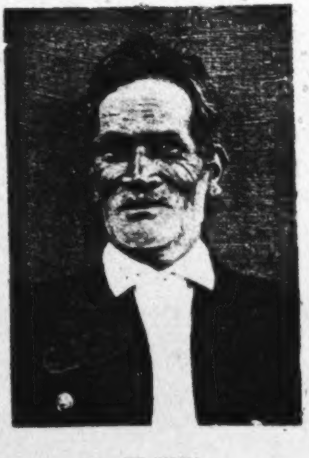


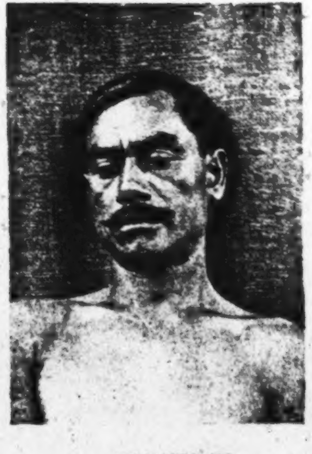
HÉ.
Clan Marama.



VIRIAMO.
Clan Ureohei.



TE HAHA.
Clan Miru.



JUAN TEPANO.
Clan Tupahotu.

[facing p. 212]

124 Most happily, these authorities were in almost every case willing and ready to talk, and our debt to them is great. They came with us, as has been seen, on our explorations of the island, but the greater part of the work was done when we were living near the village. Some of them took pleasure in coming up to Mataveri and talking in the veranda, enjoying still more, no doubt, the practical outcome of their subsequent visits to Bailey's domain—the kitchen. Others were more at ease in their own surroundings; and then we went down to the village and discussed old days in their little banana-plots, while interested neighbours came in to join the fray. Sometimes a man did better by himself, but on other occasions to get two or three together stimulated conversation. Unfortunately, some of the old men who knew most were confined to the leper settlement [164] some three miles north of Hanga Roa, and the infectious power of leprosy was not a subject which we had got up before leaving England. The Captain of the *Kildalton* feared lest even the distance of the settlement from the Manager's house might not suffice to prevent the plague being carried there by insects, and told a gruesome tale, within his knowledge, of two white men who had gone for a visit to a Pacific island, one of whom on their return to an American port had been immediately sent back to a leper colony. But how could one allow the last vestige of knowledge in Easter Island to die out without an effort? So I went, disinfected my clothes on return, studied, must it be confessed, my fingers and toes, and hoped for the best.

It would not be easy for a foreigner to reconstruct English society fifty years ago, even from the descriptions of well-educated old men; it is particularly difficult to arrive at the truth from the untutored mind. Even when the natives knew well what they were talking about, they would forget to mention some part of the story, which to them was self-evident, but at which the humble European could not be expected to guess. The bird story, for example, had for many months been wrestled with before it transpired precisely what was meant by the "first egg." Deliberate invention was rare, but, when memory was a little vague, there was a constant tendency to glide from what was remembered to what was imagined. Scientific work of this nature really ought to qualify for a high position at the bar. The witness had to be heard, and discreetly cross-examined without any doubt being thrown on his story, which would at once have given offence; then allowed to forget and again re-examined, his story being compared with that of others who had been heard meanwhile. Counsel had also to be judge and to act as reporter, and at the same time keep the witness amused and prevent the interpreter from being bored, or the court would promptly have broken up. Though great care has been exercised, it must be remembered, when a particular account is quoted, as, for example, that of Te Haha regarding the annual inspection of the tablets, while it is believed to rest on fact, its absolute accuracy cannot be guaranteed. 124

The language question naturally added to the difficulty. On landing two courses had been open, either to go on with Spanish, of which the younger men had a certain knowledge, and which was used by Mr. Edmunds, or to try to get some hold of the native tongue. The latter plan was decided on, and though at one time the difficulties seemed so great that this course was almost regretted, in the end it was vindicated. There is, as stated, a vocabulary in French made by the missionaries, and also one in Spanish, but there is no grammar of any kind. The French carpenter, Varta, was some assistance, particularly at the beginning. The first steps were the easiest. The Kanakas were much interested in my endeavours, and rushed round wildly, bringing any object they could lay hands on in order to teach its name; but even with the nouns an unexpected complication arose. The natives speak, not only their own language, but, side by side with it, that of Tahiti, which is used in their religious books and services; there are affinities between the two, but they are quite dissimilar, and to understand conversation it was necessary to learn both. This very much prolonged the task, and also lessened the results obtained. [114] [197]

The next stage, the putting together of sentences, was still more difficult. How was it possible to talk in a language which had no verb "to be"? I had, it is true, a native maid (fig. 29), but, after the simplest phrases had been learnt, topics for conversation were difficult to find. We looked through illustrated magazines together, but wild beasts, railway trains, and the greater part of the pictures of all kinds, conveyed nothing to her. The plan was therefore hit on of a tale, after the manner of the *Arabian Nights*, dealing with imaginary

124 events on the island; it was very weird, but served its purpose, though there were initial difficulties. The heroine, for instance, was christened "Maria," but "there were," Parapina said, "three Marias on the island. Which was it?" and it was long before she grasped, if indeed she ever did so entirely, that the lady was imaginary. A certain sequence of events was somehow made intelligible to her. She was then induced to repeat the story, while it was taken down. It was copied out and next day read again to her for further correction. Every word and idea gained was a help in understanding local names and the native point of view. Before the end, in addition to using the language for the ordinary affairs of life, it was found possible to get simple answers direct from the old men, and understand first-hand much of what they said.

115 Any real success in intercourse was, however, due to the intelligence of one individual who was known as Juan Tepano. He was a younger man about forty years of age, a full-blooded Kanaka, but had served his time in the Chilean army, and thus had seen something of men and manners; he talked a little pidgin English, which was a help in the earlier stages, but before the end he and I were able to understand each other entirely in Kanaka, and he made clear to the old men anything I wished to know, and explained their answers to me. It was interesting to notice how his perception gradually grew of what truth and accuracy meant, and he finally assumed the attitude of watch-dog to prevent my being imposed on. Happily, it was discovered that he was able to draw, and he took great delight in this new-found power, which proved most useful. The tattoo designs were obtained, for example, by giving him a large sheet of paper with an outline of a man or woman, also a pencil and piece of candle; these he took down to the village, gathered the old men together in their huts in the evening, and brought up in the morning the figure adorned by the direction of the ancients (fig. 88). He took a real interest in the work, learning through the conversations much about the place which was new to him, and at the end of the time triumphantly stated, "Mam-ma now knows everything there is to know about the island."

128 It is proposed to unite the information gained from locality and memory, referring where necessary to the accounts of the early voyagers, and give as complete descriptions as possible

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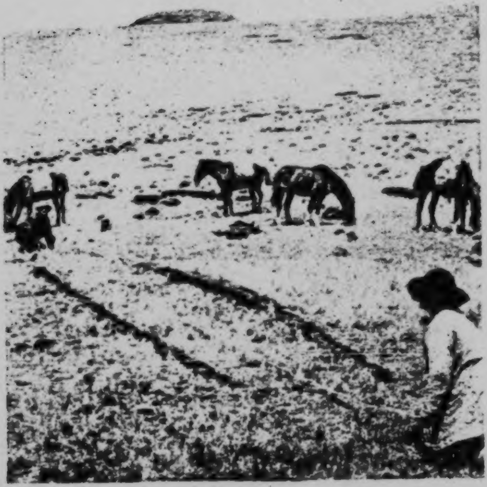
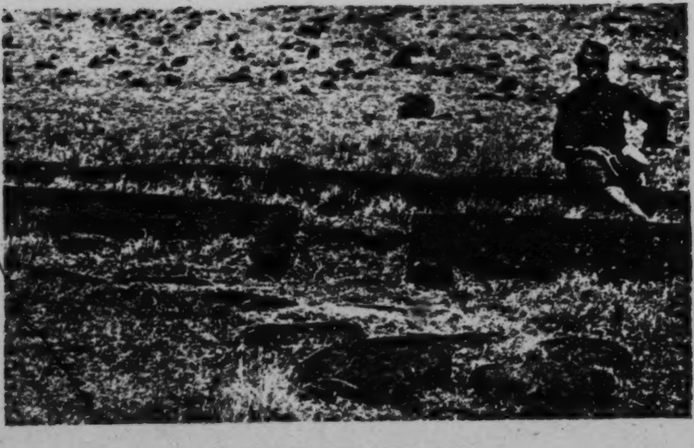
FIG. 84.

CANOE-SHAPED HOUSES.



STONE FOUNDATIONS.

FIG. 84A.



ENTRANCE AND PAVED AREA.

[Facing p. 215]

of the primitive existence which continued on Easter Island till the middle of last century. It will be seen that the condition of the people on the coming of Christianity, as we were able to ascertain it, corresponded almost exactly with that described by the first visitors from Europe, more than a hundred years earlier. Such traditions as linger regarding the megalithic remains have already been alluded to earlier in this book, but attention will be drawn to the point whenever this line of research seems successful in throwing indirect light on the origin of the great works. 128

Mode of Life.—The present natives, in talking of old times, say that their ancestors were "as thick as grass," and stood up like the fingers of two hands with the palms together; a statement from which deduction must be made for pictorial representation. The early mariners never, as we have seen, estimate the population at more than two thousand, but the land could carry many more. Mr. Edmunds calculates that about half of the total amount (or some 15,000 acres) could grow bananas and sweet potatoes. Two acres of cultivated ground would be sufficient to supply an ordinary family. 161 [134]

Housing accommodation presented no great problem. Many slept in the open, and even to-day, in the era of Christianity and European clothes, a cave is looked upon as sufficient shelter. When on moving from our "town" to our "country" house we inquired where our attendants were to sleep, we were cheerfully informed "it was all right, there was a very good cave near Tongariki"—and this cave, called Ana Havea, became a permanent annexe to the establishment (fig. 124). Some of these caves had a wall built in front for shelter. 342

Houses, however, did exist, which were built in the form of a long upturned canoe; they were made of sticks, the tops of which were tied together, the whole being thatched successively with reeds, grass, and sugar-cane. In the best of these houses, the foundations, which are equivalent to the gunwale of the boat, are made of wrought stones let into the ground; they resemble the curbstones of a street pavement save that the length is greater. In the top of the stones were holes from which sprang the curved rods, which were equivalent to the ribs of a boat, and formed the walls and roof (figs. 84 and 85). The end stones of the house are carefully worked on the curve, 342 and it is very rare to find them still in place, as they were comparatively light, weighing from one to two hundredweight, and easily carried off. Even the heavier stones were at times seized [727] upon as booty in enemy raids; one measuring 15 feet was pointed out to us near an ahu on the south coast, which had been brought all the way from the north side of the island. In the middle of one side of the house was a doorway, and in the front of it a porch, which had also stone foundations. The whole space in front of the house was neatly paved with water-worn boulders, in the same manner as the ahu. This served as a stoep on which to sit and talk, but its practical utility was obvious to ourselves in the rainy seasons, when the entrance to our tents and houses became deep in mud (fig. 84A). Near the main abode was a thatched house which contained the native oven, the stones of which are often still in place. The cooking was done Polynesian [252 354] fashion: a hole about 15 inches deep is lined with flat stones, a fire is made within, and, when the stones are sufficiently heated, the food, wrapped up in parcels, is stacked within and covered with earth, a fire being lighted on the top.

Many of the surviving old people were born and brought up in these houses, which are known as "haré paenga." The old man, for example, before alluded to, who was brought out to Raraku, roved round the mountain telling with excitement who occupied the different houses in the days of his youth. He gave a particularly graphic description of the scene after sundown, when all were gathered within for the evening meal. In addition to the main door, there was, he said, an opening near each end by which the food was passed in and then from hand to hand; as perfect darkness reigned, a sharp watch had to be kept that it all reached its proper owners. He lay down within the old foundations to show how the inhabitants [513] slept. This was parallel to the long axis of the house, the head being towards the door; the old people were in the centre in couples, and the younger ones in the ends. The largest of these houses, which had some unique features, measured 122 feet in length, with an extreme width of 12 feet; but some 50 feet [592] by 5 feet or 6 feet are more usual measurements. They were often shared by related families and held anything from ten to thirty, or even more, persons.

600 The food consisted of the usual tropical produce, such as

[p.217]

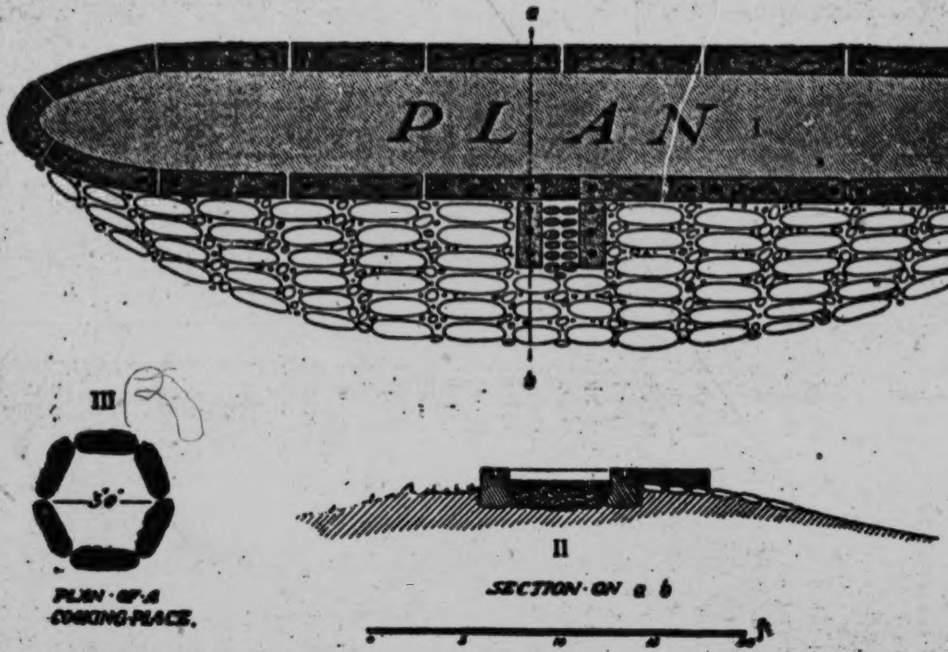

a
PLAN
b
III
3'0"
PLAN · OF · A
COOKING-PLACE.
II
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FIG. 85.—CANOE-SHAPED HOUSE.
Diagram of stone foundations, paved area, and cooking-place.

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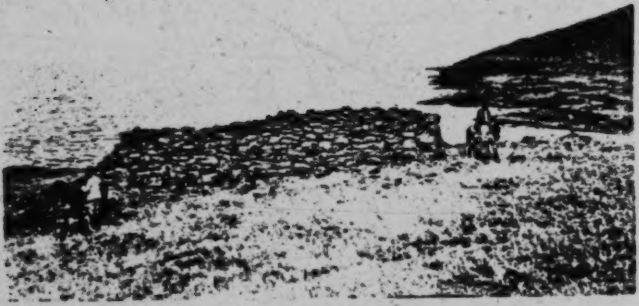
[231]

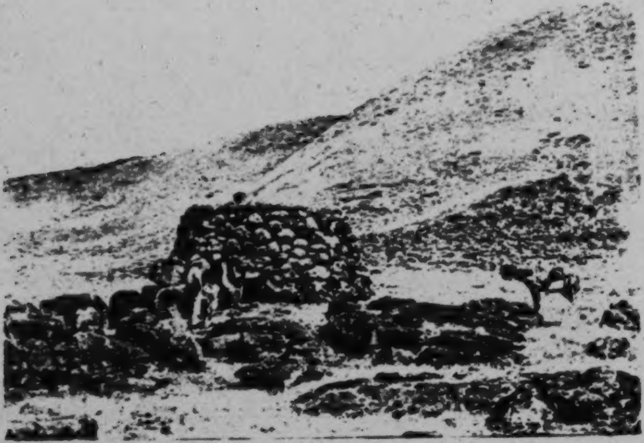
FIG. 86.



HOUSE FOR CHICKENS.

FIG. 87.

[226]



A TOWER USED BY FISHERMEN.

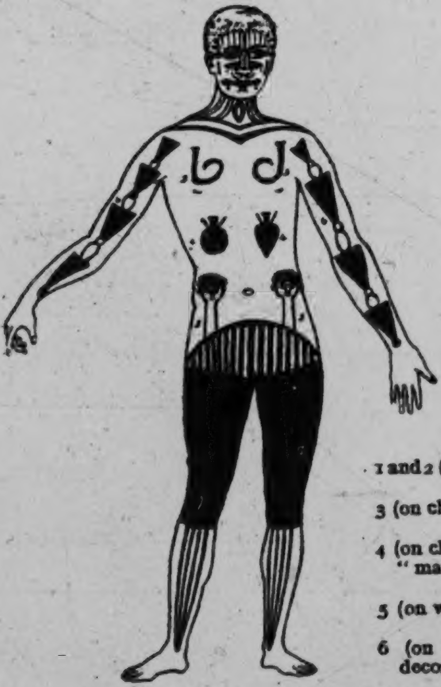
[facing p. 218]

The food consisted of the usual tropical products, such as
241 potatoes, bananas, sugar-cane, and taro. Animal diet formed a
262 very small part of it, rats being the only form of mammal; but
[136] chickens played an important rôle in native life, and the remains
of the dwellings made for them are much more imposing than
[231 those for human beings. They are solid cairns, in the centre of
which was a chamber, running the greater part of their length ;
343] it was entered from outside by two or more narrow tunnels, down
which the chickens could pass. They were placed here at night
for the sake of safety, as it was impossible to remove the stones
[226 in the dark without making a noise (fig. 86). Fish are not very
plentiful, as there is no barrier reef, but they also were an article
438] of diet, and were bartered by those on the coast for the vegetable
products obtained by those further inland. Fish hooks made of
226 stone were formerly used, and a legend tells of a man who had
marvellous success because he used one made of human bone.
The heroes of the tales are also spoken of as fishing with nets.
There are in various places on the coast round towers, built of
[343] stone, which are said to have been look-out towers whence
watchers on land communicated the whereabouts of the fish to
those at sea ; these contained a small chamber below which was
used as a sleeping apartment (fig. 87). Turtles appear on the
carvings on the rock, and are alluded to in legend, and turtle-shell ornaments were worn; but the water is too cold for them
ever to have been common, and Anakena is almost the only
sandy bay where they could have come on shore.

The sole form of dress was the cloth made from the paper
291 mulberry, and known throughout the South Seas as tapa ; it
[287] was used for loin-cloths and wraps, which the Spaniards describe
as fastening over one shoulder. Head-gear was a very important point, as witnessed by the way the islanders always stole the caps of the various European sailors. The natives had various forms of crowns made of feathers, some of them reserved for special occasions. Cherished feathers, particularly those of white cocks, were brought out of gourds, where they had been carefully kept, to manufacture specimens for the Expedition. The crowns are generally made to form a shade over the eyes, like the head-dresses of the images. Naturally, every effort was made to find the prototype of the image hats. No one recollected ever seeing anything precisely like it, but among the pictures drawn for us of various head-decorations was a cylindrical hat

241 made of grass; the brim projected all the way round as with a European hat, but it had the same form of knot on the top as that of the statues.

304 532 Tattooing was a universal practice, and the exactness of the designs excited the admiration of the early voyagers, who wondered how savages managed to achieve such regularity and accuracy. The drawings made for us from the descriptions of the old people show the men covered, not only with geometrical designs, but with pictures of every-day objects, such as chisels and fish-hooks; even houses, boats, and chickens were represented in this way according to taste. The most striking objects were drawings of heads, one on each side of the body, known as



1 and 2 (on face), Stone adzes.

3 (on chest), Fish-hooks.

4 (on chest), Spear-heads or "mataa."

5 (on waist), "Paré-pu."

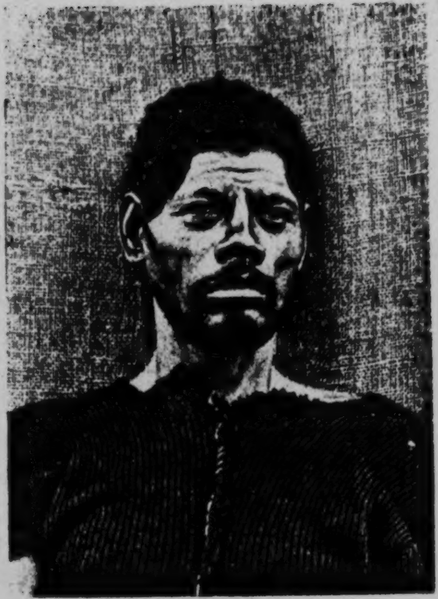
6 (on arms), Reported as decorative only.

FIG. 88.—DESIGNS USED IN TATTOOING, DRAWN BY NATIVES.

[Facing p.220]

T
142

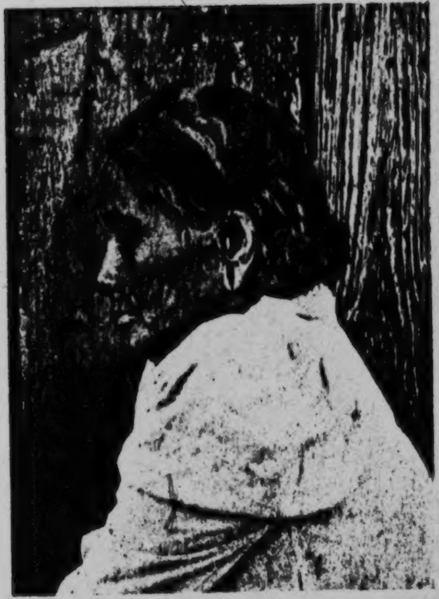
FIG. 89.



MAHANGA.
A native of the Paumotu

E
142,
304

FIG. 90.



AN OLD WOMAN OF EASTER ISLAND WITH
DILATED EAR-LOBE.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2
Tuamotu OX9

304 "paré-pu," which the old mariners describe as "fearsome
monstrosities"[1] (fig. 88). Various old persons said that they
532 remembered seeing men with a pattern on the back similar to the
rings and girdle of the images. It seems, however, doubtful
whether the image design merely represented tattoo, in view of
the fact that it was raised, not incised, and in any case this would
only put the search for its prototype a stage further back.
The fact, however, remains that those particular marks were
still being perpetuated, and form a link connecting the present
with the past. Beechey, in 1825, tells us the women were so
tattooed as to look as if they wore breeches. In addition to this
kind of décoration, the islanders adorned themselves with various
302 colours: white and red were obtained from mineral products
[386] found in certain places; yellow from a plant known as "pua,"[2]
and black from ashes of sugar-cane. They had a distinct feeling
for art. Some of the paintings found in caves and houses are
[532] obviously recent, and it is a frequent answer to questions as to
the why and wherefore of things, that they were to make some
object "look nice."

It will be remembered that not only have the images long ears,
304 but that all the early voyagers speak of them as general among
the inhabitants. It was therefore somewhat surprising to find
that no such thing was known as a man whose ears had been
perforated, though with the women the custom went on till the
introduction of Christianity, and two or three females with the
lobe dilated in this manner still survived (fig. 90). At last one
old leper recalled that the father of his foster-father had long
ears, and on asking as a child for the reason, he had received the
illuminating reply that "the old people had them like that."
He also mentioned one or two others with similar ears, and this
was subsequently confirmed by other authorities. It will be
seen that the custom, as far as men were concerned, of dilating
the lobe of the ear, must have been abandoned at the end of the
eighteenth century, or just about the time of the visits of the
[177] Spanish, English, and French Expeditions. That this was cause
and effect, and that they imitated the appearance of the foreign
sailors, seems more than a guess; it will appear from other

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[1] *Voyage of Gonzalez*, p. 90.

[2] One of the Scitamineæ—further determination awaits the blooming of plants brought back to Kew.

sources how great was the impression which was made by the 304 177
foreigners.

Social Life.—Roggeveen's description of the people as being 142
of all shades of colour is still accurate. They themselves are
very conscious of the variations, and when we were collecting
genealogies, they were quite ready to give the colour of even
remote relations: "Great-aunt Susan," it would be unhesitatingly
stated, was "white," and "Great-aunt Jemima black." The
last real ariki, or chief, was said to be quite white. "White like
me?" I innocently asked. "You!" they said, "you are red";
the colour in European cheeks, as opposed to the sallow white
to which they are accustomed, is to the native our most dis-
tinguishing mark. It is obvious that we are dealing with a
mixed race, but this only takes us part of the way, as the mixture
may have taken place either before or after they reached the
island.

They were divided into ten groups, or clans ("máta"), which 614
were associated with different parts of the island, though the
boundaries blend and overlap; members of one division settled
not infrequently among those of another. Each person still
knows his own clan.

In remembered times there were no group restrictions on [582]
marriage, which took place indiscriminately between members
of the same or of different clans. The only prohibition had
reference to consanguinity, and forbade all union nearer than
the eighth degree or third cousins. These ten clans were again
grouped, more especially in legend or speaking of the remote 614
past, into two major divisions known as Kotuu (or Otuu), and 616
Hotu Iti, which correspond roughly with the western and eastern
parts of the island. These divisions were also known respectively
as Mata-nui, or greater clans, and Mata-iti, or lesser clans. The [361]
lower portions of the island were the most densely populated
parts, especially those on the coast, and the settlements on the
higher ground appear to have been few (fig. 91).

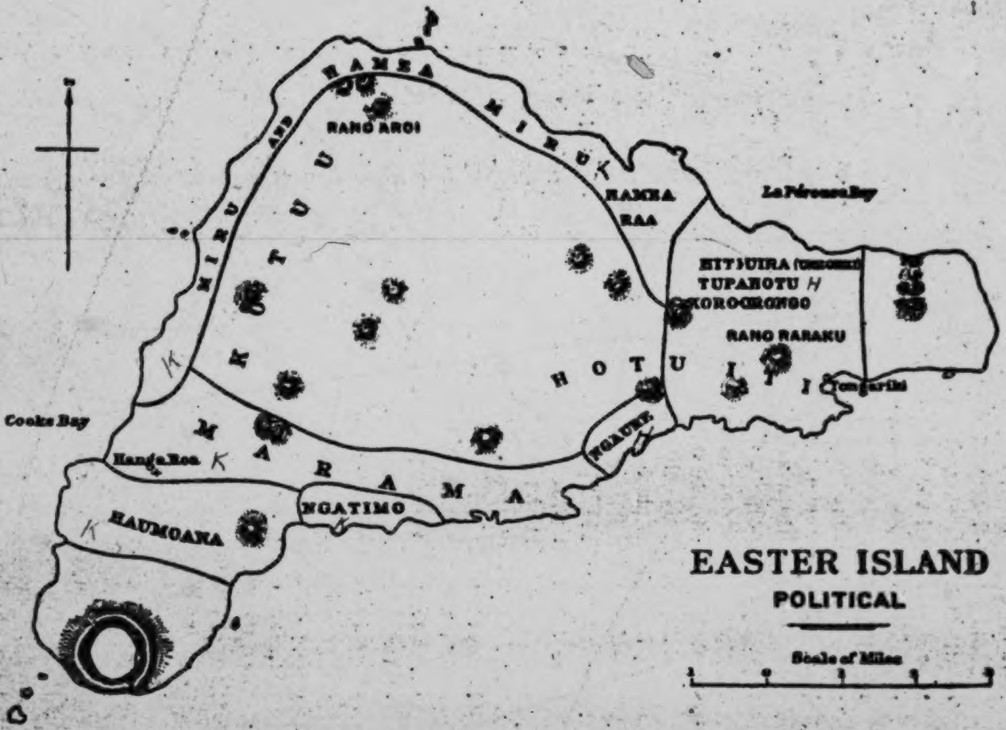
In Kotuu, the Marama and Háumoana inhabited side by side 361
the land running from sea to sea between the high central ground 614
and the western volcano Rano Kao. They had a small neigh- 621
bour, the Ngatimo, to the south, and jointly with the Miru
spread over Rano Kao and formed settlements by the margin
of the crater lake. The Miru lived on the high, narrow strip

102
361
614
621

Fig. 91.

15: Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OYZ Easter Islanders OYZ

[p. 222]


HAMEA
MIRU
AND
MIRU
RANO AROI
KOTUU
HAMEA
RAA
La Pérouse Bay
HITIUIRA
TUPAHOTU
H
KOROORONGO
RANO RARAKU
HOTU ITI
Tongariki
NGAURE
Cooks Bay
Hanga Roa
K
MARAMA
NGATIMO
HAUMOANA
K
K

EASTER ISLAND

POLITICAL

Scale of Miles

Note.—The dividing lines shown are not defined boundaries.

between the mountain in the apex and the cliff, and mixed up with them was a lesser people, the Hamea. To the east was another small clan, the Raa, which is spoken of in conjunction with the Miru and Hamea. 361. 614 621

The principal Hotu Iti clans were the Tupahotu, the Koróorongo, and the Hitiuira. The last were generally known as the "Ureohei"; they inhabited jointly the level piece of ground from the northern bay to the south coast, and had some dwellings on the eastern headland. Next to them on the south coast was a small group, the Ngaure.[1] The particular importance of the clans lies in the fact that, while they may be merely groups of one body, they may, on the other hand, represent different races or waves of immigrants. If there have been two peoples on Easter Island, these divisions are one place where we must at least look for traces for it. [174]

Legend tells of continual wars between Hotu Iti and Kotuu. In recent times general fighting seems to have been constant, and took place even between members of one clan. A wooden sword, or paoa, was used, but the chief weapon was made from obsidian, and took from it the name of "mataa." This volcanic glass is found on the slope of Rano Kao, but the principal quarries are on the neighbouring hill of Orito. Tradition says its use was first discovered by a boy who stepped on it and cut his foot. The obsidian was knapped till it had a cutting edge, and also a tongue, which latter was fitted into a handle or stick (fig. 92). The various shapes assumed were dignified by names, fourteen of which were given, such as "tail of a fish," "backbone of a rat," "leaf of a banana." It was very usual to pick up these mataa, and hoards were occasionally found; in one instance fifty or sixty were discovered below a stone in a cave, and in another case the hammer-stone was found with them which had been used in the process of squeezing off the flakes. The weapon was [721] 411 [324] [324]

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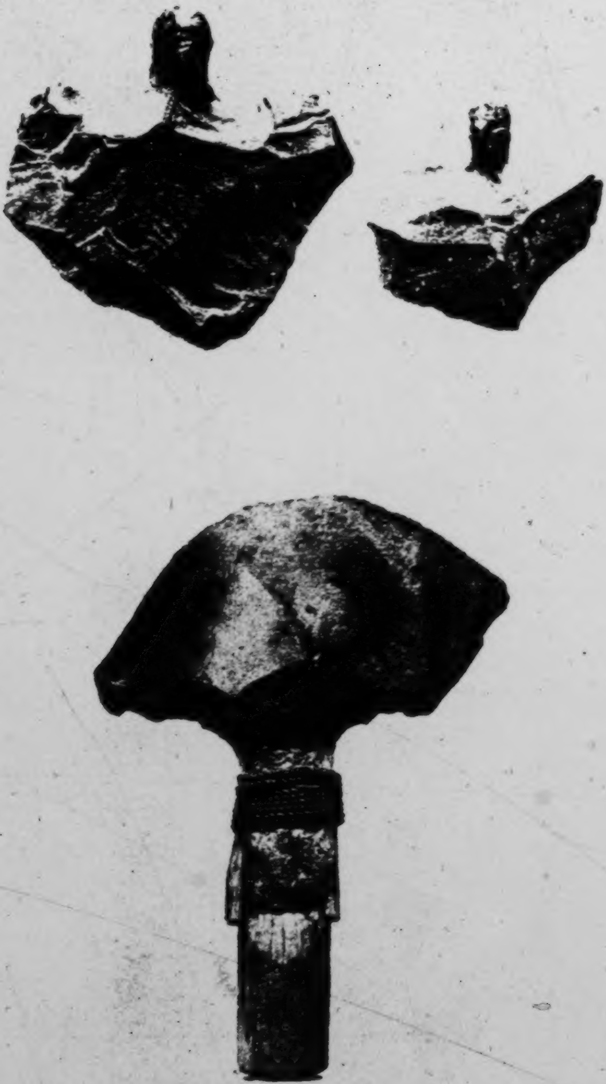
[1] Of these clan names, "Raa" means the sun and "Marama" the light. The signification of the others is not equally clear, and the natives could give no assistance; but Mr. Ray gives the following interesting information from other Polynesian sources. "Haumoana" means the sea-breeze; "Hitiuira" is probably "hiti-ra" or sunrise; and "Ure-o-hei" another version of "ura-o-hehe," or red of sundown. "Koro-orongo" is doubtless from "Koro-o-Rongo," or the ring of Rongo (a well-known Polynesian deity), that is the rainbow. "Kotuu" appears to be a contraction of "Ko Otuu," meaning "The Hill"; the name "Otuu" is used alternatively for the same district. "Hotu" is another form of the word for hill and "Iti" signifies small, it presumably refers to Rano Raraku.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 92.

411



[Brit. Mus.

OBSIDIAN SPEAR-HEADS.
(Mataa.)

[facing p. 224]

411 used both as a spear and as a javelin. A site is pointed out near
Anakena, where a man throwing down hill killed another at about
thirty-five yards. The art of making these mataa is, of course,
practically extinct, but one old man, commonly known as " Hé "
(fig. 83), brought us some which he had manufactured himself
for the Expedition, and which were fairly well wrought.

With the exception of the Miru, of which more will be said,
622 there were no chiefs nor any form of government; any man who
was expert in war became a leader. The warfare consisted
largely of spasmodic and isolated raids; an aggrieved person
gathered together his neighbours and descended on the offenders.
726 It is related incidentally that one man, going along the south
coast, "found war going on," one set of men having blocked
up another in a cave. Another story is told of six men, called
Gwaruti-mata-keva, of the clan Tupahotu, who lived in a cave
in a certain hillock on the south coast, known as Toa-toa. They
went round in a boat to Hanga Piko, stole fish, and returned
rapidly to their cave. A hundred men from Hanga Piko then
came overland to punish the robbery, and made a fire of grass
before the cave in which the men lay hidden. When the attackers
assumed that the enemy were all dead from suffocation,
they went into the cave; but those within had buried their
faces in holes scraped in the earth, and when the men from
Hanga Piko entered, they arose and slew the whole hundred.
575 A more interesting fact came out incidentally in connection with
this gang of Toa-toa, connecting them with the secret societies
found elsewhere in the Pacific. They were, it was said, in the
habit of going about after dark with their faces painted red,
white, and black, and visiting houses, where they declared they
were gods, and demanded food, which the inhabitants accordingly
gave them. The fraud, however, finally came to light when one
day a man, who was travelling with his servant, saw them washing
paint off their faces, "so they knew that they had deceived the
people, and the people gathered together and killed them."

In these internecine fights fire was very generally set to the
727 enemy's dwellings. "He often burnt houses," a young man
said, pointing to an older one, and the impeachment was not
denied. The ahu, too, were raided and bodies burnt, which
764 seems to be the cause of the burnt bones recorded by certain
travellers; there is no reason to suppose there was cremation
or sacrifice on Easter Island.

or sacrifice on Easter Island. It was in this sort of warfare that the last images were overthrown. 727

While legends record how many people were eaten after each affray, all living persons deny, with rather striking unanimity, not only that they themselves have ever been cannibals, but that their fathers were so. If this is correct, the custom was dying out for some reason before the advent of Christianity;[1] their grandfathers, the old people admit, ate human flesh, but, if there were any rites connected with it, they "did not tell." The great-grandmother of an old man of the Miru clan was, according to his account, killed on the high central part of the island by the Ureohei and eaten. In revenge for the outrage, one of her sons, Hotu by name, killed sixty of the Ureohei. Another son, who had pacifist leanings, thought the feud ought then to be ended, but Hotu desired yet more victims, and there was a violent quarrel between the two brothers, in which the peace-maker was struck on the head with a club; for, as Hotu remarked, if they had slain his father, it would have been different, but really to eat his mother was "no good." 266 [727]

Our acquaintance with the person said to have been "the last cannibal," or rather with his remains, came about accidentally during the time when I was alone on the island. A little party of us had ridden to the top of the volcano Rano Kao; and on the southern side of the crater, that opposite Orongo, some of the natives were pointing out the legendary sites connected with the death of the first immigrant chief, Hotu-matua. Suddenly one of them vanished into a crevice in the rocks, and reappeared brandishing a thigh-bone to call attention to its large size. I dismounted, scrambled into a little grotto, or natural cave, where a skeleton was extended; the skull was missing, but the jaw-bone was present, and the rest of the bones were in regular order; the individual had either died there or been buried. Bones were in the department of the absent member of the Expedition, but it was of course essential to collect them, from the view of determining race, and the natives never resented our doing so. I therefore passed these out, packed them in grass 266 172

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[1] Since writing the above the following has been seen: "The higher Polynesian races, such as the Tahitians, Hawaiians, Samoans, had one and all outgrown, and some of them had in part forgot, the practice (cannibalism) before Cook or Bougainville had shown a top-sail in their waters."—*In the South Seas*, R. L. Stevenson, p. 94.

266 in the luncheon-basket, and, sitting down on a rock, asked to be told the story of the cave. "That," my attendants replied, "is 172 Ko Tori." He was, they said, the last man on the island who had eaten human flesh. In this hiding-place he had enjoyed his meals, and no one had ever been able to track him. There had formerly been a cooking-place, but it was now hidden by a fall of stones. He had died as a very old man at the other end of the island, apparently in the odour of sanctity; to judge by the toothless jaw if he had not deserted his sins they must long ago have deserted him. His last desire was to be buried in the place with which he had such pleasant connections, and in dutiful regard to his wishes, or because it was feared that his ghost might otherwise make itself unpleasant, some of the young men bore the corpse on stretchers along the south coast and up to the top of the mountain, depositing it here. The next thing was to get at some sort of date; chronology is naturally of a vague order, and the most effective method is, if possible, to connect events with the generation in which they happened. "Did your grandfather know him," was asked, "or your father?" The answer was unexpected. "Porotu," they said, pointing to one of the old men, "helped to carry him," and silence fell on the group. My heart sank; I had then undone this last pious work and committed sacrilege. To my great relief, however, strange sounds soon made it clear that the humorous side had appealed to the escort; they were suffocating with mirth. "And now," they said, gasping between sobs of laughter, "Ko Tori goes in a basket to England." As I write, Ko Tori resides at the Royal College of Surgeons, and has done his bit towards elucidating the mystery of Easter Island.

834 Sexual morality, as known to us, was not a strong point in life on the island, but marriage was distinctly recognised, and 581 the absolute loose liver was a person apart. Polygamy was 595 usual, but many seem to have had only one wife. The children 611 belonged to the father's clan, and are often distinguished by his name being given after their own. At the same time the clan of the mother was not ignored, and a man would sometimes fight 764 for his maternal side. If a man had sons by more than one wife, after his death each claimed the body of his father to lie on the ahu of his mother's clan, and the corpse might thus be carried to several in turn, finally returning to its own destination.

to several in turn, finally returning to its own destination. We 500 collected a certain number of genealogical trees, the various 126 dramatis personæ being for this purpose represented by matches or buttons. It was not a very popular line of research, the cry being apt to be raised, "Now let's talk of something interesting"; but some two hundred names were in this way placed in their family groups, with details of clan, place of residence and colour, and some knowledge obtained with regard to many more. It is not of course enough ground on which to found any theory, but it was very useful in checking information gathered in other ways. Only in one case was it possible to get back beyond the great-grandfather of our informant, but the knowledge of family connections was often greater than would be found among Europeans. [163] The number of childless marriages was striking.

The early story of Viriamo ((fig. 83)) the oldest woman living 115 in our day, gives a picture of this primitive state of things. She belonged to the clan of Ureohei, and her family had lived for some generations, as far back as could be remembered, on the edge of the eastern volcano, not far from Raraku. The great-grandfather, who was dark, had as his only wife a white woman of the Hamea. Their son was white, and had two wives, one of the Tupahotu and one of the Ngaure. By the first, although she also was white, he had a dark son who married a white wife of his own clan, Ureohei, but of a different group. Viriamo was the second of their eight children, all of whom were white save herself and her eldest brother. Four of the girls died young 115 in the epidemic of smallpox in 1864. Viriamo and two of her 304 sisters were initiated as children into the bird rite.[1] When older she was tattooed with rings round her forehead and with the dark-blue breeches. Somewhat later, but still as a young woman, she went over to Anakena and had her ears pierced, but she never had the lobe extended, preferring to let it remain small. When asked about her marriage, she bridled as coyly as a young girl. Her first union was a matter of arrangement, the husband, 115 who was also of the Ureohei, giving her father much food, and, if she had refused to accept the situation, she would, she said, have [585] been beaten. There was no ceremony of any kind, no new [584] clothes nor feasting; her father simply took her to her new home and handed her over. The house was near the two statues with

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[1] See below, pp. 266–68.

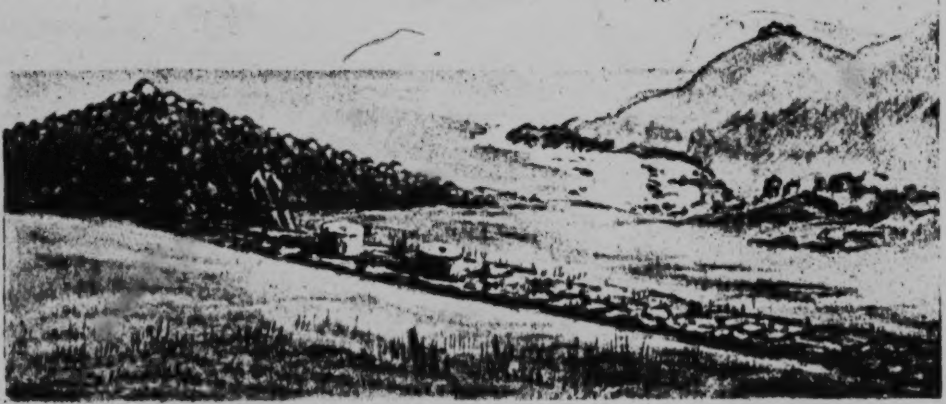
115 the projecting noses, excavated on the south-eastern slope of Raraku (fig. 73) and, when she wanted water, rather than cross the boundary and go round to the lake by the gap, through the hostile dwellers on the western side, she used to clamber with her vessel up the boundary rift in the cliff face. There was one [586] white child, who died young, but her marriage was not a success, and Viriamo left the man and went off to live with one of the Miru clan at Anakena. His house already contained a wife and family, also four brothers, but they all got on quite happily together. [592, 595] She had five children by this man, who, like their father, were all white; four of them, however, died in infancy. This was the result of the parents having most unfortunately fallen foul [754] of an old man, whose cloak had been taken without his consent, and who had accordingly prophesied disaster. The remaining child, a daughter, was living and unmarried when we were on the island. The last husband was the most satisfactory of the three; he was a Tupahotu living near Tongariki. She was handed over to him as a matter of family arrangement, in discharge of a debt, but she was quite amenable to the exchange, and was very fond of him. He was light in colour, but her only child by this marriage, our friend Juan, was dark, taking, as he said, "after my mam-ma."

593 The women do not seem, judging by existing remains, to have had always a happy time. Dr. Keith, who examined the skulls collected by the Expedition, concludes his report on one of the female specimens as follows[1]: "The most likely explanation is that the indent of the left temple was the cause of death, produced by the blow of a club, and that the suppuration and repair of the right side has been also produced by a former blow which failed to prove fatal. Two other skulls, also those of women, show indented fractures in the left temporal region."

764 Any deficiency at marriages, in the way of social festivity, was made up at funerals. [602] These were attended by persons from all over the island, for "when they were not fighting, they were all cousins." In answer to the remark that "considering the population their whole time must have gone in this way," it was cheerfully observed that "they had nothing else to do, so they all went, everybody took food and everybody ate." The parents of one of our friends, Kapiera, lived at Anakena, but he was born on the south side of the island near Vaihu "when his

764

FIG. 93.



AHU, HANGA MAIHIKO

Old Image Ahu, converted to semi-pyramid form, with paved approach; also two stones on which were exposed the corpses of slain men.

[facing p. 229]

mother went for a funeral." The men who knew the tablets went also and sang, but there seems to have been little or nothing in the way of rites. The missionaries were impressed with the fact that there was no ceremony of any kind at a burial. 764

Most elaborate spells were, however, performed in connection with a man who had been slain, known as "tangata ika," or fish-man; the corpse was kept from resting either day or night while his neighbours went in pursuit of vengeance. In front of one ahu, on the north coast, some pieces of the old statues have been formed into a rude chair. On this, it was said, had been seated the naked body of a man belonging to the district, Kotavari-vari by name, who had been killed at Akahanga on the south coast. One man kept the corpse from falling, while two others sat behind and chanted songs to aid the avengers. These watchers were covered with black ashes, wore only feather hats, and carried the small dancing-paddle known as "rapa" (fig. 116); the chief man in charge of the ceremony was known as the "timo." It must have been an eerie scene as dusk came on. The story is told of a murder near Tongariki. In this case the victim's corpse was placed on the ahu and turned over at intervals by the watchers. Hanga Maihiko, a converted image ahu on the south coast, is one of those which have a paved approach, and there are on the pavement two stones—pieces of a hat and a statue—specially used for exposing "fish-men" (fig. 93). If these charms failed to act, there was a still more reliable way. The clothes of the victim were buried beneath the cooking-place of the foe, and when he had partaken of food prepared there he would certainly die the night following. Some of the carved tablets were connected with these rites; one was certainly known as that of the "Ika," while there is said to have been another called "Timo," which was the "list" kept by each ahu of its murdered men. 766 [292] [764]

The custom of exposing the dead was, as has been stated, going on in living memory. The information already given on this head is confirmed by the accounts of the missionaries,[1] but 764 burial was also practised, the mode of disposal being a matter of choice. There were two drawbacks to exposure: firstly, if the deceased was for any reason an uncanny person, his ghost might make itself unpleasant—he was safer hidden under stones; secondly, the body, if left in the open, might be burnt by enemies; this latter was the reason given for the burial of the last great chief, Ngaara, who was interred in one of the image ahu on the western coast. Not only were the ruins of the greater ahu still being used, but up till 1863 smaller ones were being built. One was pointed out on the north coast as having been put up for an individual, the maternal aunt of our guide, the lady having had the misfortune to be killed by a devil in the night. It was a small structure, ovoidal in shape, 10 feet in length, with a flat top sloping from a height of 9 feet at the end towards the sea, to 4 feet 6 inches at that towards the land; there was beneath it a vaulted chamber for bones.

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[1] "These bodies, enveloped in mats, are placed on a heap of stones or on a kind of wooden structure, the head being turned towards the sea. Now, as all the population live round the island, dried skeletons are to be met all along this coast, and no one seems to take any notice of them."—Letter from Brother Eyraud—*Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, Jan. 1866.

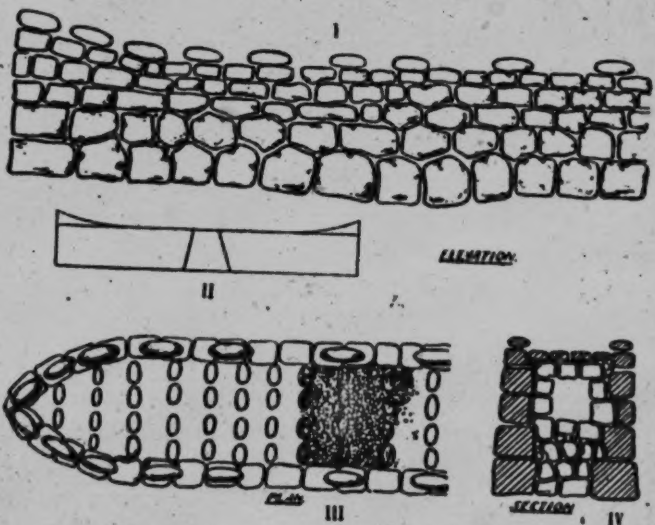

FIG. 94.—DIAGRAM OF AHU POE-POE (CANOE-SHAPE).

Burial cairns, called "ahu poe-poe," were being made in modern times, and a man skilled in their construction was amongst those who were carried off to Peru. The word "poe-poe" is described

The word "poe-poe" is described as meaning a big canoe, such as their ancestors came in to the island. 764 [501] It is applied to two types of ahu, one of which is obviously built to resemble a boat; of this kind there are about twelve in the island. One large one (fig. 94) measured as much as 178 feet in length, the width being 20 feet, while the ends, which are made like the bow and stern of a canoe, are about 10 feet to 15 feet in height. The flat top is paved with sea-boulders, and is surrounded by a row of the same in imitation of the gunwale of a boat. In one such ahu two vaults were found by us just below the surface with perfect burials. One was the body of an old man, the other of a woman with a child. Both had been wrapped in reeds, and with the body of the woman were some glass beads. On the surface of the ahu were a few bones, possibly of a body which had been exposed there, but the ahu had apparently been built for the two interments. It is less obvious why the same name, "ahu poe-poe," should be applied to a burial-place which was wedge-shaped in form. It follows the lines of the image ahu in so far as having a wall towards the sea flanked on the land sides by a slope of masonry. It might be held to represent the prow of a boat, but resembles rather a pier or jetty. Only some six of these were seen, of which the longest was 70 feet. One in a lonely spot, at the very edge of a high cliff, which overlooked Anakena Bay, formed a most striking abode for the dead (fig. 95).

In a few cases the term ahu is given to a pavement, generally by the roadside, neatly made of rounded boulders and edged with a curb; the form was said to be ancient. One of those on the west road was reported as specially dedicated to mata-toa—which signifies victors or warriors—and the same was said of a differently made ahu on the south coast.[1]

Neither exposure nor interment was necessarily confined to 766 ahu, and corpses were frequently disposed of in caverns, as in the case of Ko Tori. Three instances were mentioned, an uncle and two nephews, where the corpses, after being exposed, were lowered with a rope down the crevasses of the cliff of Raraku

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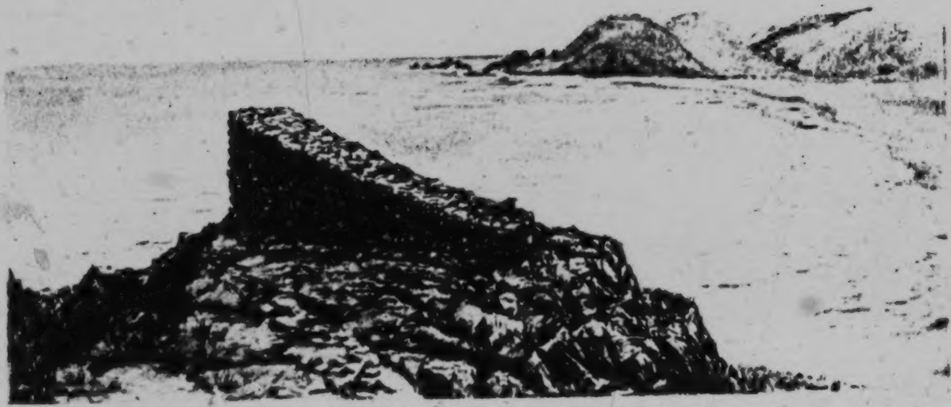
[1] When all those ahu which can be placed in categories as Image, Semi-Pyramid, Canoe, Wedge-shaped, or Pavement have been noted, there remain, out of the total of two hundred and sixty burial-places, some fourteen which are unique in design; and between sixty and seventy which cannot be classified, either because they are mere cairns or in too ruined a condition to be identified.

FIG. 95.



AHU POE-POE (WEDGE SHAPE).

[Facing p. 232]

766 in order to evade the enemy. (One of the nephews, who had been of the party when the final statues were overthrown, had met with a tragic end, being drowned by catching his hand in a rock when diving for lobsters under water.) With the exception of those near the standing statues, we practically never found an earth burial. This seems to account for the exaggerated estimates of the number of human remains on the island; it is doubtful if even five hundred skulls could be collected, but, whether in caves or ruined ahu, a large proportion of those which exist are very much in evidence.

764 Memorials of the dead were erected in various places independently of the actual locality where the corpse rested. Some of these were simply mounds of earth, which can be seen on various hills; there is a regular succession on the landward rim of the Raraku crater, opposite to the great cliff, but one at least of these was a memorial to a man whose body had been disposed of in the clefts of the cliff. Others of these independent memorials were in the shape of cairns about 6 feet in height, known as "pipi-hereko," and were formerly surmounted by a white stone. Many of them still exist, and they are particularly numerous on the high ground above Anakena Cove. The locality was chosen as one which was but little inhabited, for the taboo for the dead [784 (or pera) extended to them, and no one went near them in the daylight, on penalty of being stoned, till the period of mourning 688] had been terminated with the usual feast. Various voyagers commented on these cairns, which were marked objects, and Cook thinks that they may have been put up instead of statues.

539 It would seem by the following tale, which imposes a somewhat severe strain on the European imagination, that piles of stones had in the native mind a certain resemblance to the human figure. "There was once an old lady (who had an arm so long that it could have reached right across the island. She was a bad old woman, and once a month had a child to eat, so a certain man determined to put an end to her power for doing harm. He took her out in a boat to fish, first telling his small son to collect stones, and after they had gone to put them in piles in front of the house of the woman, and also to make a fire and much smoke. When the canoe had got out to sea, he looked back and found the boy had done as he was told, and glimpses of the cairns could be seen among the clouds of smoke. Then

he called to the old woman, 'Look, there are men at your house!' 539 So she put out her long arm to seize what she thought were the people going to rob her hut, whereon the man seized the paddle and brought it down on her arm and broke it; then he killed the old woman and threw her body into the sea.

Life was by no means dull in Easter Island, for if a feast was 527 not being given to commemorate a departed relation, it was 778 arranged in honour of one whilst still alive. The "PAINA," which means simply picture or representation, was given by the family as a testimonial of esteem to a father, or possibly a brother who might be either alive or dead; it was a serious matter, and the original direction for the celebration came from a supernaturally gifted individual known as an "ivi-atua." The paina was a large figure made of woven rods, and the host would clamber up inside it and look through eyes or mouth; it had a crown made of the wings of a particular sea-bird, known as "makohe," and long ears. Occasionally it was put up on a special spot, where, for example, a man had been killed, but the interesting point in connection with the paina is that the usual place for erection was in front of an image ahu on its landward side, and at most, or all, of the large ahu, there can still be seen, in the grass at the foot of the paved slope, the holes where the paina have stood. It was kept in place by four long ropes, one of which passed over the ahu. The feast was held in the summer, and lasted from two to four days; at any given ahu there might be only one in the season or as many as five. The drawbacks, which would have seemed obvious to such a locality, do not seem to have [224] clouded the entertainment; the feasting was great, and consisted largely of rats which were caught in the hen-houses. The recollection of these entertainments and the crowds who attended them were very vivid, and Viriamo's eyes brightened as she told of the singing, dancing, and feasting of her youth.

There are records of another figure which appears to have been different from the paina; it was clothed and known as "KO PEKA." The Spanish Expedition in 1770 says that the islanders brought down to the beach, on the day when the three crosses were set up, an idol about 11 feet high like a "Judas," stuffed with straw; it was all white, and had a fringe of black hair hanging down its back. They put it up on stones and sat

527 cross-legged around it, howling all night by the light of flares.
As no information was volunteered to us about such celebrations,
778 the natives were asked if they had ever known a similar figure,
and an old man at once replied that there had existed one just
like the description, made of reeds, as a memorial of a dead wife
or "fine" child; it stood in front of the house, or was sometimes
carried to a hillock where the people assembled to mourn. One
of the officers of the La Pérouse Expedition also described a
figure seen near a platform; it was 11 feet in height, clothed in
white tapa ("*étoffe blanche du pays*"); it had hanging round
the neck a basket covered with white, and by the side of this bag
the figure of a child 2 feet long. This seems to confirm the
information that it was intended to represent a woman.

527 Another great festivity, given for a father either living or dead,
was the "KORO." This was a house-party on a very extended
scale. A special dwelling made with poles and thatched was put
[342] up, and, according to accounts, which surround it no doubt
with a halo from the past, measured some hundreds of feet in
length and 20 feet in height. An old man stated that at a
celebration at which he was present there were "a hundred
guests," a number which is probably a guess, but the addition
that there were "ten cooking-places" sounds like memory.
Invitations to these festivities were much in request, as there was
[431] "no work to do"; presents of food were brought to the hero who
distributed them to the party. They seem to have lasted indefinitely,
going on for months, and the time was passed with
various entertainments. The old people sang, the young people
danced, and the host, who lived in a little house near, came and
[825 looked on. On the last day there was a great feast, and the house
412] was broken down with the aid of the carved wooden lizards,
which are associated with the island (fig. 117). We were
[343] puzzled in coming across a rough stone building, near Anakena,
which seemed to be neither ahu, dwelling, nor chicken-house;
it had been, the men told us, a shelter for the posts of the koro,
where they were kept in readiness for the next celebration.

There was yet another entertainment which is said to have
527 been in honour of a mother, as a koro was of a father. In at
535 least four different places on the island are to be seen a dancing-ground
known as "KAUNGA." It is a narrow strip paved with
345 pebbles, over 200 feet in length by 2 feet in width, and not

unlike the paved approach to some of the ahu. A demonstration 527
was given of the way it was used. The dancers, "fine men, fine
women," as was explained with emphasis, proceeding along it 535
single file, holding rapa in both hands. In connection 345
with some or all of the kaunga there was a house where the
party remained indoors for a long time previous to the dances, [826]
in order to "get their complexions good," a touch which shows
that a white skin was admired.

These feasts were held in certain months only, determined by [527]
the appearance of the heavens after nightfall. On the extremity 821
of the eastern headland there is an outcrop of boulders, one of
which is incised with a spiral design; the place is known as
"Ko Te Papa-ui-hetuu," or, "The Rock-for-seeing-stars," and
here the old men came to watch the constellations. About two
hundred yards from these boulders there is another engraved
stone on which ten cup-shaped depressions are visible; this
represented, it is said, "a map of the stars."

The season for the Paina depended on the position of the 821
three central stars of Orion, with regard to which the following
story is related. A certain married woman, on going down to 773
bathe, was carried off by a stranger. When her husband dis- 539
covered this, he slew her in his anger, and she fled up to be
a star. The husband then took their two boys, one in each
hand, and followed her to the sky, where the three form the
belt of Orion. The wife, however, would have nothing to do
with them, and remained in a separate part of the heavens.
This is the only nature myth which we encountered on the
island.

CHAPTER XVI

NATIVE CULTURE IN PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES (*continued*)

Religion—Position of the Miru Clan—The Script—The Bird Cult—Wooden Carvings.

RELIGION

771 THE religion of the Islanders, employing the word in our sense, seems always to have been somewhat hazy,[1] and the difficulty in grasping it now is increased by the fact that since becoming Roman Catholics they dislike giving the name of "atua," or god, to their old deities; it only drops out occasionally. They 776 term them "aku-aku," which means spirits, or more frequently "tatane," a word of which the derivation is obvious. The confusion of ideas was crystallised by a native, who gravely remarked that they were uncertain whether one of these beings was God or the Devil, so they "wrote to Tahiti, and Tahiti wrote to Rome, and Rome said he was not the Devil, he was God"; a modern view being apparently taken at headquarters of the evolution of religious ideas. Both these words, tatane and aku-aku, will be employed for supernatural beings, without prejudice to their [128] original character, or claims to divinity; some of them were certainly the spirits of the dead, but had probably become deified; the ancestors of Hotu-matua were reported to have come with him to the island. They existed in large numbers, being both male and female, and were connected with different parts of the island; a list of about ninety was given, with their places of 776 residence. No worship was paid, and the only notice taken 782 of these supernatural persons was to mention before meals 264 the names of those to whom a man owed special duty, and

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[1] Our impressions on this head are confirmed by a remark of Brother Eyraud. "Though I have lived in the greatest of intimacy and familiarity with them, I have never been able to discover them in any act of actual religious worship."—*Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, Jan. 1866.

invite them to partake; it was etiquette to mention with your 776
own the patron of any guest who was present.] There was no 782
sacrifice; the invitation to the supernatural power was purely 264
formal, or restricted to the essence of the food only. Nevertheless,
the aku-aku, in this at least being human, were amiable or
the reverse according to whether or not they were well fed. If
they were hungry, they ate women and children, and one was
reported as having a proclivity for stealing potatoes; if, on the
contrary, they were well-disposed to a man, they would do work
for him, and he would wake in the morning to find his potato-field
dug, which, as our informant truly remarked, was "no
like Kanaka."

The aku-aku appeared in human form, in which they were 776
? indistinguishable from ordinary persons. One known as Uka-
o-hoheru looked like a very beautiful woman, and was the wife 773
of a young Tupahotu who had no idea she was really a tatane.
She lived with him at Mahatua on the north coast, and bore him a child. One very wet day she was obliged to leave the house to take fresh fire to the cooking-place where it had gone out. When she returned, her husband was angry that she had no red paint on her face, and, not heeding her explanation that the rain had washed it off, took a stick to beat her. She ran away, and he followed, till at last she sat down on the edge of the eastern headland, where there is now an ahu known by her name. When by and by he came up, she told him to go back and look after the child, and fled away like a rushing whirlwind over the sea and was no more seen.

Two other female tatane are reported to have lived together in a cave on the cliff-side of Paréhé,[1] whose names were Kava-ara and Kava-tua. They heard all men tell of the beauty of a certain Uré-a-hohové, a young man who lived near Hanga Roa; so they went down to see him, put him to sleep, and carried him on his mat up to their cave, where they left him. Before going away they told an old woman, also an aku-aku, that she was not to go and look into the cave. This she naturally proceeded to do, and, finding Uré, warned him to eat nothing the two tatane might give to him, supplying him herself with some

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[1] The outermost of the three hillocks on the eastern volcano on which the Spaniards set up the crosses in 1770. Half of it has been worn away by coastal erosion (fig. 78).

776 chicken. When therefore his captors came back and offered him food, he only pretended to take it, and ate the chicken 773 instead. They then went away again. The old woman came back, and said, "If cockroaches come, kill them; if flies come, kill them; but if a crab comes, do not kill it." Uré did as he was told, and killed the cockroaches and flies, which were other tatane; but the crab he did not kill, it was the old woman. Meanwhile for many days the father of Uré wept for him, till some men sailing under the cliff while fishing, heard a song, and looking up saw the missing man; but they would not go and fetch him, though the father gave them much food, for the cliff was steep and the cave difficult to reach. At last a woman volunteered for the task, and was lowered over the cliff in a net, and by this means succeeded in fetching Uré safely to the top. The history ends with his return to his home, and does not mention if, in correct fashion, he married his fair deliverer.

Aku-aku were not immortal. A man called Raraku, after whom the mountain is said to have been named, caught a big "heke," which seems to have been an octopus, in the sea near Tongariki and ate it, with the result that he went mad, and all people gave chase to him. He caught up a wooden lizard (fig. 117) and, using it as a club, ran amok among tatane across the north shore and down the west coast, killing them right and left; the names of twenty-three were given who thus met their fate.

Human beings, on the other hand, were liable to be attacked by tatane, more particularly at night, when there was risk, not only to their bodies, but also to their own spirits,[1] which were at large while they slept. It is still firmly believed that in dreams the soul visits any locality present to the thought. On one of the ahu is a rough erection of slabs, said to be the house of the aku-aku Mata-wara-wara, or "Strong-Rain." He had as a partner another aku-aku called Papai-a-taki-vera, and they arranged between them that Mata should bring on rain, while Papai constructed a house of reeds which was only there at night; then when the spirits of sleeping people, which were wandering abroad, became cold with the rain, they went into the house and the tatane killed them. The unfortunate sleeper waked in the morning feeling distinctly unwell, he lingered on for two or three

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[1] The same word aku-aku was used for the spirit both of the living and the dead, or else the Tahitian "varua"; they were said to be equivalent.

days, and then died. It was not essential to life to have a soul, 776
but you could not really get on comfortably without it. No 773
knowledge survives of any belief or ideas with regard to a future [774]
state. The spirit, it was said, appeared occasionally for five
or ten years after a man's death and then vanished.

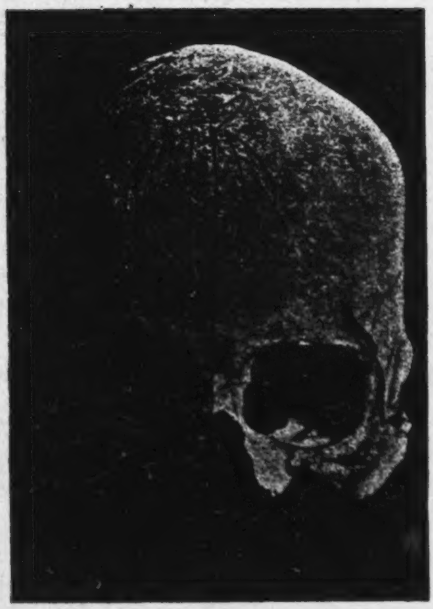
Pan in the shape of tatane is by no means dead. Not only do such beings haunt the crater of Rano Raraku, but tales are told of weird apparitions at dusk which vanish mysteriously into space.

There were no priests, but certain men, known as "koromaké," 791
practised spells which would secure the death of an enemy, and
there was also the class known as "ivi-atua," which included
both men and women. The most important of these ivi-atua, of
whom it was said there might be perhaps ten in the island, held
commune with the aku-aku, others were able to prophesy, and
could foresee the whereabouts of fish or turtle, while some had
the gift of seeing hidden things, and would demand contributions
from a secreted store of bananas or potatoes, in a way which was
very disconcerting to the owner.

There was practically only one religious function of a general 796
nature; it was very popular and had a surprising origin.
Attention was attracted on the south coast by a particularly
long stoep of rounded pebbles measuring 139 feet, and obviously [346]
connected with a thatched house now disappeared. That, our
guides said in answer to a question, "is a haré-a-té-atua, where
they praised the gods." "What gods?" "The men who came
from far away in ships. They saw they had pink cheeks, and
they said they were gods." The early voyagers, for the cult
went back at least three generations, were therefore taken for
deities in the same way as Cook was at Hawaii. The simplest
form of this celebration took place on long mounds of earth
known as "miro-o-orne," or earth-ships, of which there are
several in the island, one of them with a small mound near it
to represent a boat. Here the natives used to gather together
and act the part of a European crew, one taking the lead and
giving orders to the others. A more formal ceremony was
held in a large house. This had three doors on each side by
which the singers entered, who were up to a hundred in number,
and ranged themselves in lines within; [in one house, of which a [534]
diagram was drawn, a deep hole was dug in the middle, at the

FIG. 96.

531
142
614
789



[Butterworth

A MIRU SKULL, WITH INCISED DESIGN.

[facing p. 240]

796 bottom of which was a gourd covered with a stone to act as a drum.
On the top of this a man danced, being hidden out of sight in
[534] the hole.]

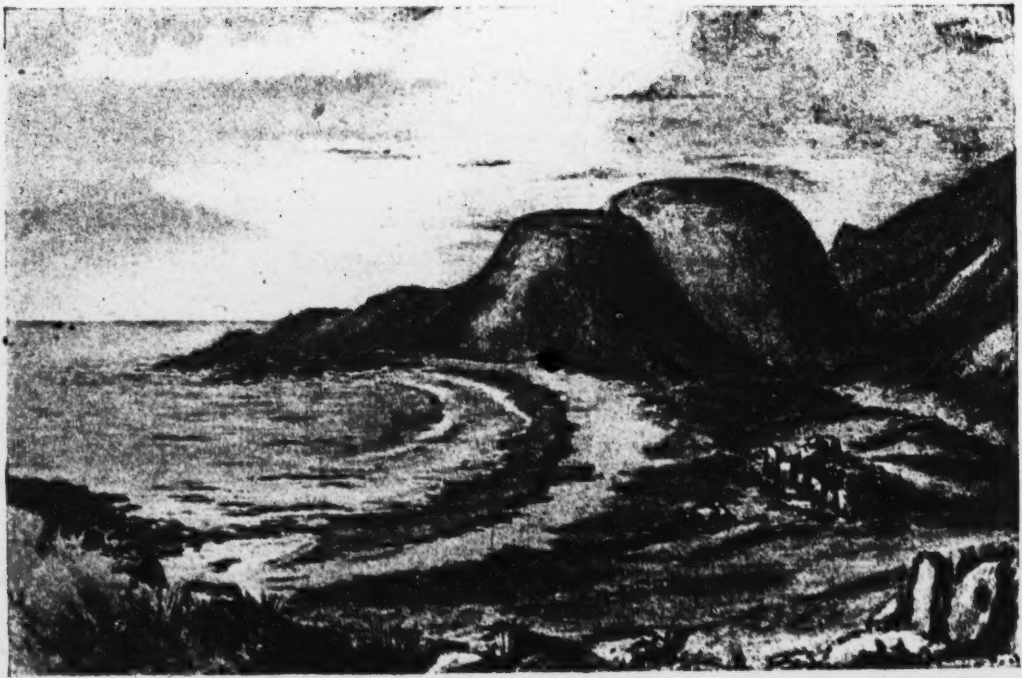
In other cases, two, or perhaps three, boats were constructed inside the house, the masts of which went through the roof; these boats were manned with crews clad in the garments of European sailors, the gifts from passing vessels being kept as
[533] stage properties. Fresh music was composed for every occasion, and in one song, which was quoted, much reference is made to the "red face of the captain from over the seas." The position of chief performer[1] was one of great honour, being analogous, on a glorified scale, to the leader of a cotillon of our own day. It was stated by an old man that his great-grandfather had so acted, and even the words sung were still remembered. Te Haha, a Miru (fig. 83), gave us to understand that he had been a great social success in his youth, and counted up three koro, and seven haré-até-atua at which he had been present. As he was a handsome old man, and was connected with the court of the chief Ngaara, his pride of recollection was very probably justified. Juan, mixing up, no doubt, recollections of a later date, gave a vivid representation on one of these spots of the pseudo-captain striding about and using very strong language, while he called upon the engineer to "make more smoke so that the ship should go fast."

THE MIRU CLAN

614 On the border-line, between religion and magic, wherever, if any-where, that line exists, was the position of the clan known as the
789 Miru. Members of this group had, in the opinion of the islanders, the supernatural and valuable gift of being able to increase all food supplies, especially that of chickens, and this power was particularly in evidence after death. It has been known that certain skulls from Easter are marked with designs, such as the outline of
[532] a fish; these are crania of the Miru, and called "puoko-moa," or fowl-heads, because they had, in particular, the quality of making hens lay eggs (fig. 96). Hotu, the Miru, whose mother, it may be remembered, was the victim of a cannibal feast, made his
[523] own skull an heirloom, as "it was so extremely good for chickens," that he did not wish it to go out of the family. His son gave it

133

FIG. 97.



ANAKENA COVE.
Hill on left has terraced summit.

[facing p. 241]

to a relative, who was the father of an old man from whom we 614
managed to obtain it. When the time came to hand it over to 789
us, the late owner began to cling to it affectionately, and say
that he "wept much at the thought of its going to England";
as, however, the bargain had already been completed, we remained
obdurate, and at the time of writing Hotu resides with
Ko Tori at the Royal College of Surgeons.

The Miru were unique in other ways; they were the only group 614
which had a headman or chief, who was known as the "ariki," or 622
sometimes as the "ariki-mau," the great chief, to distinguish him
from the "ariki-paka," a term which seems to have been given
to all other members of the clan.[1] The office of ariki-mau was
hereditary, and he was the only man who was obliged to marry [582]
into his own clan. It was customary when he was old and feeble
that he should resign in favour of his son. There are various
lists of the succession of chiefs, counted from the first immigrant,
Hotu-matua. The oldest lists are those given by Bishop Jaussen[2]
and by Admiral Lapelin,[3] which contain some thirty names.
Thomson gives one with fifty-seven. In our day there was
admittedly much uncertainty about the sequence, but the
number was said to be thirty,[4] and two independent lists were
obtained. All these categories differ, though they contain many
of the same names, particularly at the beginning and end.

The last man to fill the post of ariki with its original dignity 614
was Ngaara; he died shortly before the Peruvian raid, and 622
becomes a very real personage to anyone inquiring into the 792
history of the island. He was short, and very stout, with white
skin, as had all his family, but so heavily tattooed as to look
black. He wore feather hats of various descriptions, and was
hung round both back and front with little wooden ornaments,
which jingled as he walked. When our authorities can remember
him his wife was dead and he lived with his son Kaimokoi. It [784]
was not permitted to see them eat, and no one but the servants
was allowed to enter the house. His headquarters were at [173]
Anakena, the cove on the island where, according to tradition,
the first canoe landed.

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[1] Evidence on this head was rather contradictory, but no Miru could be found, male or female, to whom the title was not given.

[2] "L'Ile de Paques," M. Tépano Jaussen, *Bulletin Géographique*, 1893, p. 241.

[3] *Revue Maritime et Colonial*, vol. xxxv, p. 109.

[4] Thirty is, however, a very favourite number: cf. the folk-tales. [801]

614 the first canoe landed. (It is unique in having a sandy shore, and
622 is surrounded by an amphitheatre of low hills. Behind it to the
792 west rises the high central ground of the island, beyond it, on the
other side, is the eastern plain ;) it thus approximately terminates the strip of land held by the Miru (fig. 97). There are now at Anakena the remains of six ahu, a few statues, and the foundations of various houses. Ngaara held official position for the whole island, but he was neither a leader in war, nor the fount of justice, nor even a priest ; he can best be described as the custodian of certain customs and traditions. The act most nearly approaching a religious ceremony was conducted under his auspices, though not by him personally. In time of drought
he sent up a younger son and other ariki-paka to a hill-top to
302 pray for rain : they were painted on one side red, on the other
782 black with a stripe down the centre. These prayers were ad-
789 dressed to Hiro, said to be the god of the sky, a supernatural
being in whom we seem getting nearer the idea of a divinity, as distinct from a spirit of the dead, and of whom we would gladly have learnt more than could be discovered.

789 The ariki-paka had other duties besides praying for rain ; they
622 made "maru," or strings of white feathers tied on to sticks, which
614 they placed among the yams to make them grow. They buried a
792 certain small fish among the sugar-canes to bring up the plants,
and when a koro was being held, and it was consequently particularly desirable that the fowls should thrive, an ariki-paka painted a design in red, known as the "rei-miro," below the door of the chicken-house (fig. 115).

Te Haha, the "social success," who was an ariki-paka in the entourage of Ngaara, gave graphic descriptions of life at Anakena when he was a boy. If, he said, people wanted chickens, they applied to the Ariki-mau, who sent him with maru, and his visits were always attended with satisfactory results.

Ngaara never consumed rats, and one day, coming across the
262 boy watching rats being cooked, he was extremely angry, for it
transpired that, if Te Haha had eaten them, his power for producing chickens would have diminished ; presumably because he would have imbibed ratty nature, which was disastrous to eggs and young chickens. The Ariki, however, made himself useful to him on occasion. The younger Miru had long hair reaching to his heels, and one day, when he was asleep in a cave, some one cut it

792
off. So he went to Ngaara, who told him to bring ten coconuts, 614
which he broke and put in pieces of the sacred tree, "ngau-ngau"; 622
the spell blasted the offender, who promptly died. Ngaara himself 789 X
attended the inauguration of any house of importance. The
wooden lizards were put formally on each side of the entrance [342]
to the porch, and the Ariki and an ivi-atua, who "went with
him like a tatane," were the first to eat in the new dwelling:
only the houses with stone foundations were thus honoured.
The Ariki was visited one month in the year by "all people,"
who brought him the plant known as pua on the end of sticks,
put the pua into his house, and retired backwards.

He also held receptions on other occasions, seated on the
broken-off head of an old image, which was pointed out on a
grassy declivity among the hills behind Anakena; these were
special occasions for criticising the tattoo. Those who were well [304]
tattooed were sent to stand on one hill slope, whilst those who
were badly done were sent to another; the Ariki and men behind
him laughed contemptuously at the latter (which, as the process
was permanent and could not be altered, seems slightly unkind.)
These receptions were also attended by men who had made [845
boats, and by twins, to whom the Ariki gave a "royal name." 551]
Such children were not, as in so many countries, considered
unlucky, but it was necessary that at birth they should live in
a house apart, otherwise they would not survive. This superstition still exists. Shortly before our arrival a woman in the
village had given birth to twins, for whom a little grass house
was put up; another woman went in and brought them out to
the mother to nurse.

THE SCRIPT

Closely connected with the subject of the Miru clan is that 212
of the method of writing. While we can only catch glimpses of the image cult through the mists of antiquity, the tablets, known as "koháu-rongo-rongo,"[1] were an integral part of life on the island within the memory of men not much past middle age (fig. 98). The highest authority on them was the ariki Ngaara. It was tantalising to feel how near we were to their translation and yet how far. Te Haha had begun to learn to write, but found that his hand shook too much, besides, as he explained, Ngaara

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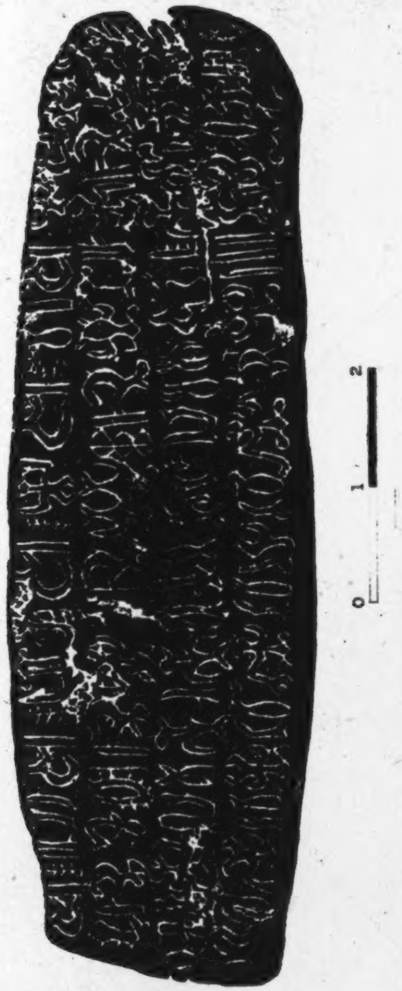
[1] Sometimes called koho-rongo-rongo.

FIG. 98.

212



[Brit. Mus.

PORTION OF AN INCISED TABLET (*Kohau-rongo-rongo*).

[facing p. 244]

212 used "to send him to the chickens." Juan had had the offer of learning one form of such script, but, not unnaturally, had looked upon it with some contempt, preferring European accomplishments. The information which could be gathered was, therefore, with one exception, which will be noted later, simply that of the layman, or man in the street, who had been aware of the existence of the art and seen it going on around him, but had no personal knowledge.

The tablets were of all sizes up to 6 feet. It was a picturesque sight to see an old man pick up a piece of banana-stem, larger than himself, from among the grove in which we were talking, and stagger along with it to show what it meant to carry a tablet, though, as he explained, the sides of the tablet were flat, not round like the stem. It is said that the original symbols were brought to the island by the first-comers, and that they were on "paper," that when the paper was done, their ancestors made them from the banana plant, and when it was found that [463 withered they resorted to wood. Every clan had professors in 614] the art who were known as rongo-rongo men ("tangata-rongo-rongo"). They had houses apart, the sites of which are shown in various localities. Here they practised their calling, often sitting and working with their pupils in the shade of the bananas; their wives had separate establishments. In writing, the incision was [413] made with a shark's tooth: the beginners worked on the outer sheaths of banana-stems, and later were promoted to use the wood known as "toro-miro."[1]

The glyphs are, as will be seen, so arranged that when the figures of one row are right way up, those of the one immediately below it are on their heads; thus only alternate rows can, at the same time, be seen in correct position (fig. 98). The method of reading was, according to Te Haha, to read one row from left to right, then come back reading the next from right to left, the method known as boustrophedon, from the manner in which an ox ploughs a furrow. The finished ones were wrapped in reeds [784] and hung up in the houses. According to two independent authorities they could only be touched by the professors or their servants, and were taboo to the uninitiated, which, however, does not quite agree with other statements, nor with that of the missionaries that they were to be found in "every house." They

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[1] Sophora Toromiro.

were looked upon as prizes to be carried off in war, but they 212
were often burnt with the houses in tribal conflict.

Ngaara is said to have had "hundreds of kohau" in his house, and instructed in the art, which he had learnt from his grandfather. He is described, with a vivid personal touch, as teaching the words, holding a tablet in one hand and swaying from side to side as he recited. Besides giving instruction, he inspected the candidates prepared by other professors, who were generally their own sons; he looked at their kohau and made them read, on which he either passed them, clapping if they did well, or turned them back. Their sponsors were made personally responsible. If the pupils acquitted themselves creditably, presents of kohau were made to the teachers; if the youth failed, the tablets of the instructor were taken away.

Every year there was a great gathering of rongo-rongo men at 212.
Anakena, according to Te Haha, as many as several hundreds of 463
them came together. The younger and more energetic of the population assembled from all districts in the island to look on. They brought "heu-heu" (feathers on the top of sticks), tied pua on to them, and stuck the sticks in the ground all round the place. The inhabitants of the neighbouring districts brought offerings of food to Ngaara, that he should be able to supply the multitude, and the oven was "five yards along." The gathering was near the principal ahu, midway between the sandy shore and the background of hills. The Ariki and his son Kaimokoi sat on seats made of tablets, and each had a tablet in his hand; they wore feather hats, as did all the professors. The rongo-rongo men were arranged in rows, with an alley-way down the centre to the Ariki. Some of them had brought with them one tablet only; others as many as four. The old ones read in turn, or sometimes two together, from the places where they stood, but their tablets were not inspected. Te Haha and his comrades stood on the outskirts, and he and one other lad held maru in their hands. If a young man failed, he was called up and his errors pointed out; but if an old man did not read well, Ngaara would beckon to Te
Haha, who would go up to the man and take him out by the ear. [689]
Our informant repeated this part of the story identically months later, and added that the Ariki would say to the culprit, "Are you not ashamed to be taken out by a child?"; the offender's hat was taken away, but the tablet was not inspected.

212 463 The entire morning was spent in hearing one half of the men read; there was an interval at midday for a meal, after which the remainder recited, the whole performance lasting till evening. Fights occasionally ensued from people scoffing at those who failed. Ngaara would then call Te Haha's attention to it, and the boy would go up to the offenders with the maru in his hand and look at them, when they would stop and there would be no more noise. When the function was over, the Ariki stood on a platform borne by eight men and addressed the rongo-rongo men on their duties, and doing well, and gave them each a chicken. Another old man, Jotefa, gave a different account of the great assembly, by which the Ariki sat on his stoep and the old men stood before him and "prayed"; according to this version they either did not bring their tablets or their doing so was voluntary. In addition to the great day, there were minor assemblies at new moon, or the last quarter of the moon, when the rongo-rongo men came to Anakena. The Ariki walked up and down reading the tablets, while the old men stood in a body and looked on.

Ngaara used also to travel round the island, staying for a week or two in different localities with the resident experts. Another savant on the south coast was said to be "too big a man to have a school," and also went about visiting and inspecting learned establishments in the same manner.

Ngaara, before the end, fell on evil days. The Ngaure clan was in the ascendancy, and carried off the Miru as slaves; the Ariki was taken to Akahanga on the south coast with his son, Kaimokoi, and grandson, Maurata. They were there five years in captivity, and the "Miru cried much"; at the end of that time the clan united with the Tupahotu and rescued the old man. He was then ill, and died not long afterwards at Tahai, on the west coast, near Hanga Roa, while living with his daughter, who had married a Marama. For six days after his death everyone worked at making the sticks with feathers on the top (heu-heu), and they were put all round the place. He was buried in the ruined image ahu at Tahai, his body being carried on three of [766] the tablets, and followed through a lane of spectators by the rongo-rongo men; the tablets were buried with him. His head paid the penalty of its greatness, and was subsequently stolen; its whereabouts was unknown. Ten or fifteen of his tablets were given to old men; the rest went to a servant, Pito, and on his death to Maurata. When Maurata went to Peru, Také, a relative of Te Haha, obtained them, and Salmon asked Te Haha to get hold of them for him. Také, however, unfortunately owed Te Haha a grudge, because when Te Haha was in Salmon's service, and consequently well off, he did not give him as many presents as his relative thought should have been forthcoming, and he consequently refused to surrender them. They were hidden in a cave whose general locality was surmised, but Také died without making known the exact site, and they could never be found. Kaimokoi's tablets were burnt in war. 212 463X [578]

The question remains what were the subjects with which the tablets dealt, and in what manner did they record them? Various attempts have been made to deal with a problem which will probably never be wholly solved. Twice before our own day native assistance has been sought to decipher them. It will be remembered that the existence of these glyphs was first reported by the missionaries; but even at that time, when volunteers were asked for who could translate them, none came forward. Bishop Jaussen, Vicaire Apostolique of Tahiti, managed to find in that island a native of Easter among those brought there to work on the Brander plantations, who was supposed to understand them, and who read them after the boustrophedon method. From the information given by him, the Bishop was satisfied that the signs represented different things, such as sun, stars, the ariki, and so forth, and has given a list of the figures and their equivalent. At the same time he held that each one was only a peg on which to hang much longer matter which was committed to memory. The other attempt to obtain a translation was that of Paymaster Thomson, of U.S.S. *Mohican*, in 1886. There was then living an old man, Ure-vae-iko by name, who was said to be the last to understand the form of writing; he declined to assist in deciphering them on the ground that his religious teachers had said it would imperil his soul. Photographs, however, were shown, and, by the aid of stimulants, he was induced to give a version of their meaning, the words of which were taken down by Salmon. It was, however, remarked that when the photographs were changed, the words proceeded just the same. 212 114 124 [211]

Inquiries were made by the Expedition about this old man, and it was agreed by the islanders that he had never possessed

212 114 124 any tablets nor could he make them, but that he had been a servant of Ngaara and had learnt to repeat them. Before leaving the island we went with the old men through the five translations given by Thomson. Of three nothing was known; one which describes the process of creation was recognised as that of a kohau, but looked at a little askance, as there were Tahitian words in it. The last was laughed out of court as being merely a love-song which everyone knew.

Our own early experiences had resembled those of the Americans. Photographs of tablets, which were produced merely to elicit general information, were to our surprise promptly read, certain words being assigned to each figure; but after a great deal of trouble had been taken, in drawing the signs and writing down the particular matter, it was found that any figure did equally well. The natives were like children pretending to read and only reciting. It was noted, however, with interest, that in perhaps half a dozen cases different persons recited words approximately the same, beginning, "He timo te ako-ako, he ako-ako tena," and on inquiry it was said that they were derived from one of the earliest tablets and were generally known. It was "like the alphabet learned first"; Ure-vai-iko had stated that they were the "great old words," all others being only "little ones." To get any sort of translation was a difficult matter, to ask for it was much the same as for a stranger solemnly to inquire the meaning of some of our own old nursery rhymes, such as "Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle"—some words could be explained, others could not, the whole meaning was unknown. It seems safe, however, to assume that at least we have here the contents of one of the old tablets.

212 With regard to other kohau, a list was obtained of the subjects with which they were believed to deal. These amounted to thirteen in all, most of the names being given by several different persons. We have seen that there was a kohau of the "Ika," the murdered men; this was known to only one professor, who taught it to a pupil, and the two divided the island between them, the master taking the west and north coast to Anakena and the pupil the remainder. A connected, or possibly the same, tablet was made at the instance of the relatives of the victim and helped to secure vengeance. Certain kohau were said to be lists of wars; some dealt with ceremonies, and others

formed part of ceremonies themselves. They were in evidence at koro, where Ngaara and the professors used to come and "pray for the father," and a woman went on to the roof of the house holding the "Kohau-o-te-puré" (prayer tablet). In another case, a woman who wished to honour her father-in-law, and at the same time secure fertility, set up a pole round which she walked holding a child and a tablet, given her by Ngaara, while he and other rongo-rongo men who brought their kohau at his order stood by and sang. 212

Perhaps the most interesting tablet was one known as the "Kohau-o-te-ranga." The story was told to us sitting on the foundation of a house on the east side of Raraku, the aspect which is not quarried. This house, it was said, had been the abode of two men, who were old when the informant was a boy, and who taught the rongo-rongo; some days ten students would come, other days fifteen. The wives and children of the old men lived in another house lower down the mountain. One of the experts, Arohio by name, was a Tupahotu, and had as a friend another member of the same clan called Kaara. Kaara was servant to the Ariki, and had been taught rongo-rongo by him, and Ngaara, trusting him entirely, gave into his care this most valuable kohau known as "ranga." It was the only one of the kind in existence, and was reported to have been brought by the first immigrants; it had the notable property of securing [567] victory to its holders, in such a manner that they were able to get hold of the enemy for the "ranga"—that is, as captives or slaves for manual labour. Kaara, anxious to obtain the talisman for his own clan, stole the kohau and gave it to Arohio, who kept it in this house. When Ngaara asked for it, the man said that it was at Raraku, but before the Ariki could get hold of it, Arohio sent it back to Kaara, and these two thus sent it backwards and forwards to one another, lying to Ngaara when needful. The Ariki seems to have taken a somewhat feeble line, and, instead of punishing his servant, merely tried to bribe him, with the result that he never again saw his kohau. The son of Arohio sold it to one of the missionaries, and it is presumably one of those which went to Tahiti. The matters with which it would naturally have been supposed that the rongo-rongo would deal, such as genealogies, lists of ariki, or the wanderings of the people, were never mentioned.

212 124 We were fortunately just in time to come across a man who had been able to make one species of glyphs, though he was no longer, alas ! in the hey-day of his powers. We were shown one day in the village a piece of paper taken from a Chilean manuscript book, on which were somewhat roughly drawn a number of signs, some of them similar to those already known, others different from any we had seen (fig. 99). They were found to have been derived from an old man known as Tomenika. He was, by report, the last man acquainted with an inferior kind of rongo-rongo known as the "tau," but was now ill and confined to the leper colony. We paid a visit to him armed with a copy of the signs, but found him inside his doorway, which it was obviously undesirable to enter, and disinclined to give help; he acknowledged the figures as his work, recited "He timo te ako-ako," and explained some of the signs as having to do with "Jesus Christ." The outlook was not promising.

212 126 Another visit, however, was paid, this time with Juan's assistance, and though the old man appeared childish, and the natives frankly said that "he had lost his memory," things went better.

He was seated on a blanket outside his grass-hut, bare-legged, wearing a long coat and felt hat; he had piercing brown eyes, and in younger days must have been both good-looking and intelligent. He asked if we wanted the tau, and requested a paper and pencil. The former he put on the ground in front of him between his legs, and took hold of the pencil with his thumb above and first finger below; he made three vertical lines, first of noughts then of ticks, gave a name to each line, and proceeded to recite. There was no doubt about the genuineness of the recitation, but he gabbled fast, and when asked to go slowly so that it could be taken down, was put out and had to begin again; he obviously used the marks simply to keep count of the different phrases. At the end of the visit he offered to write something for next time. We left some paper with him, and on our return two or three days later he had drawn five lines horizontally, of which four were in the form of the glyphs, but the same figure was constantly repeated, and there were not more than a dozen different symbols in all. It was said by the escort to be "lazy writing." Tomenika complained that the paper was not "big enough," so another sheet was given, which was put by the side of the first and the lines continued in turn horizontally. He drew from left to right rapidly and easily. 212 126 Unfortunately, it did not seem wise to touch the paper, but the writing was copied, by looking over it as he went on, with the sincere hope that his blanket did not contain too many inhabitants of some infectious variety. The recitation was partly the same as on the previous occasion, the signs taking the place of ticks; anything from three or four to ten words were said to each sign. If he made a variation when asked to repeat, it was in transposing the order of two phrases; evidently the signs themselves were not to him, now at any rate, connected with particular words.

When we subsequently went with our escort into the meaning 212 of the words, it was found that the latter half of each phrase generally consisted of one of the lower numericals preceded by the word "tau," or year—thus, "the year four," "the year five," etc.; the numbers, roughly speaking, ran in order of sequence up to ten, recommencing with each line. The first part of the phrase was generally said to be the name of a man, but of this it was difficult to judge, as children were called after any object or place; thus "flowering grass" might be the name of a thing, or of a place, or of a man called after either the object or the locality.

Happily, one of the most reliable old men, Kapiera by name, had at one time lived with Tomenika, who was said to have been in those days always busy writing; and he was able to explain the general bearing of the tau. When a koro was made in honour of a father, an expert was called in to commemorate the old man's deeds, "how many men he had killed, how many chickens he had stolen," and a tablet was made accordingly. There was, in addition, a larger tablet containing a list of these lesser ones, and giving merely the name of each hero and the year of his koro. It would read somewhat thus, "James the year four, Charles the year five," and so forth, going up to the year ten, when the numbers began again. If there were two koro in a year, they came under the same numeral. It was this general summary which had been recited by Tomenika, and, though there was a certain amount of confusion, each line seems to have represented a decade. In addition, as will be seen, "James" and "Charles" each had a kohau of their own.

Kapiera was able to give a specimen of the lesser tau; it illus-

FIG. 99.

TOMENIKA'S SCRIPT.

[facing p. 252]

212 trates interestingly the general method of condensation in which, even in the recitations, a few words assume or implicate extended knowledge. It ran thus, "Of Kao the year nine," "Ngakurariha the eldest"; then come five men's names followed by the name of a fish; then a doubtful word; then "that side island my place." "I see Ngakurariha at the koro." The story, as explained, was that Kao, a man of Vinapu on the south coast, and Ngakurariha, his eldest son, went to Mahatua on the north side and stayed with the five men whose names are given, who were brothers, and learnt from them the tau. Having done this, they proceeded to murder them, and went and took a fish, then returned to Rano Kao, made a koro and the tau.

[784] The tau was, it was said, originally made by an ancestor of the first immigrant chief, Hotu-matua; it was not taboo in the same way as the other rongo-rongo, and was not known to Ngaara. There were, about the beginning of last century, only three personages acquainted with it. One was Omatohi, a Tupahotu, whose son, Tea-a-tea, was Tomenika's foster-father and instructor in the art. It was said by Tomenika himself and by others that he "only knew part," and there were other signs with which he was not acquainted, for his foster-father had died before he knew all.

A great effort was subsequently made to get further information from Tomenika, more particularly as to the exact method of writing, but he was back in his hut very ill, and all conversation had once more to be done through the doorway. Every way that could be thought of was tried to elicit information, but without real success. He did draw two fresh symbols, saying first they were "new" and then "old," and stating they represented the man who gave the koro, but "there was no sign meaning a man." "He did not know that for ariki, the old men did," "the words were new, but the letters were old," "each line represented a koro." An attempt to get him to reproduce any tau made by himself was a failure. The answers, on the whole, were so wandering and contradictory, that after a second visit under those conditions, making five in all, the prospect of getting anything further of material value did not seem sufficient to justify the risks to others, however slight. As the last interview drew to a close, I left the hut for a moment, and leant against the wall outside, racking my brains to see if there was any question left unasked, any possible way of getting at the information; but most of what the old man knew he had forgotten, and what he dimly remembered he was incapable of explaining. I made one more futile effort, then bade him good-bye and turned away. It was late afternoon on a day of unusual calm, everything in the lonely spot was perfectly still, the sea lay below like a sheet of glass, the sun as a globe of fire was nearing the horizon, while close at hand lay the old man gradually sinking, and carrying in his tired brain the last remnants of a once-prized knowledge. In a fortnight he was dead. 212

No detailed systematic study of the tablets has as yet been possible from the point of view of the Expedition, but it seems at present probable that the system was one of memory, and that the signs were simply aids to recollection, or for keeping count like the beads of a rosary. To what extent the figures were used at will, or how far each was associated with a definite idea it is impossible to say. Possibly there was no unvarying method; certain ones may conveniently have been kept for an ever-recurrent factor, as the host in the tau, and in well-known documents, such as "he timo te ako-ako," they would doubtless be reproduced in orthodox succession. But in the tablets which we possess the same figures are continually repeated, and the fact that equivalents were always having to be found for new names, as in that of the fish-man, or ika, suggest that they may have been largely selected by the expert haphazard from a known number. As Tomenika said, "the words were new, but the letters were old," or to quote Kapiera to the same effect, they were "the same picture, but other words." It will be noted how few men are reported to have known each variety of rongo-rongo, and that while Ngaara looked at the tablets of the boys, apparently to see if they were properly cut, it was in the recitation only of the older men that accuracy was insisted on. The names which Bishop Jaussen's informant assigned to some five hundred figures may or may not be accurate, but whether the native or anyone else could have stated what the signs conveyed is another matter. It is easy to give the term for a knot in a pocket-handkerchief, but no one save the owner can say whether he wishes to remember to pay his life insurance or the date of a tea-party. 212 211

In trying to enter into the state of society and of mind which

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[facing p. 254 - A(a)]

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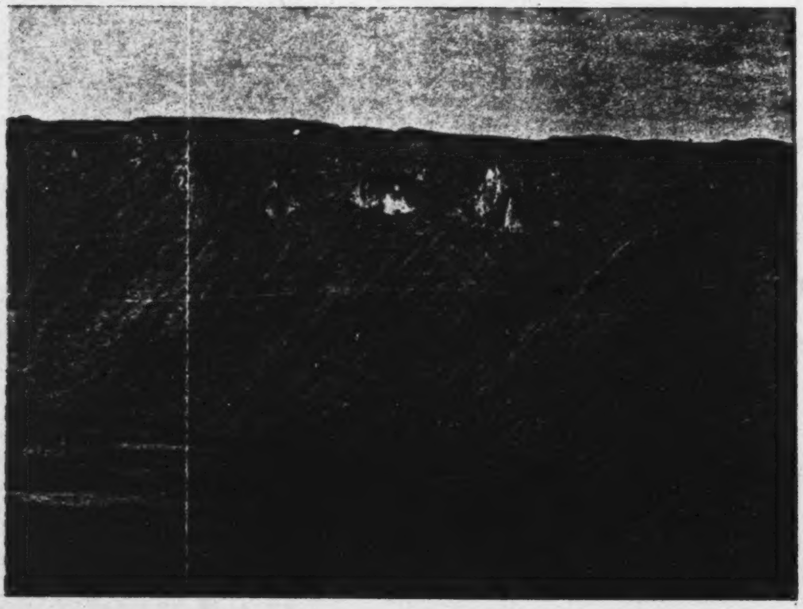

CRATER LAKE, RANO KAO: ORONGO VILLAGE AND SCULPT

[Facing p. 254-A(b)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

133

VILLAGE AND SCULPTURED ROCKS ON THE RIGHT.

[facing p. 254-A (c)]

FIG. 100.

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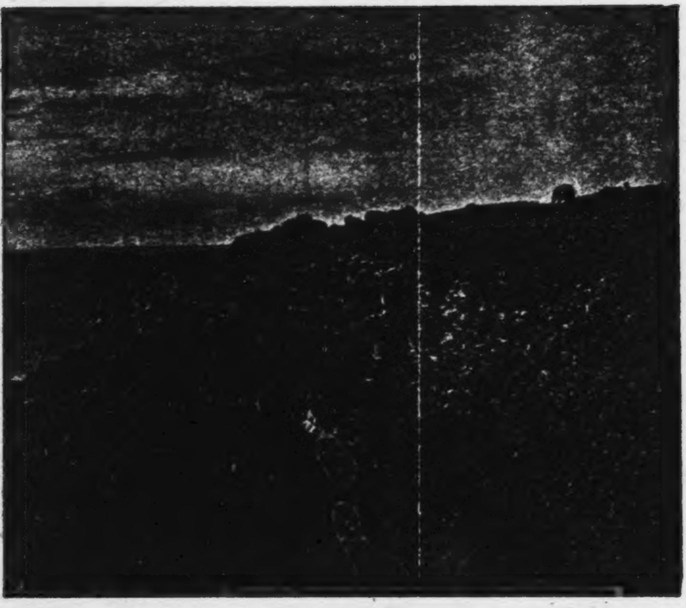
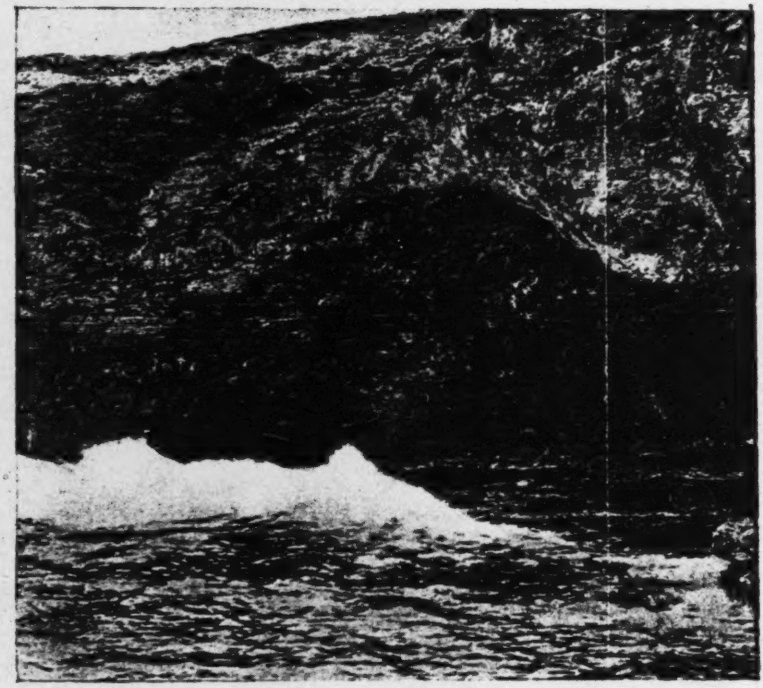
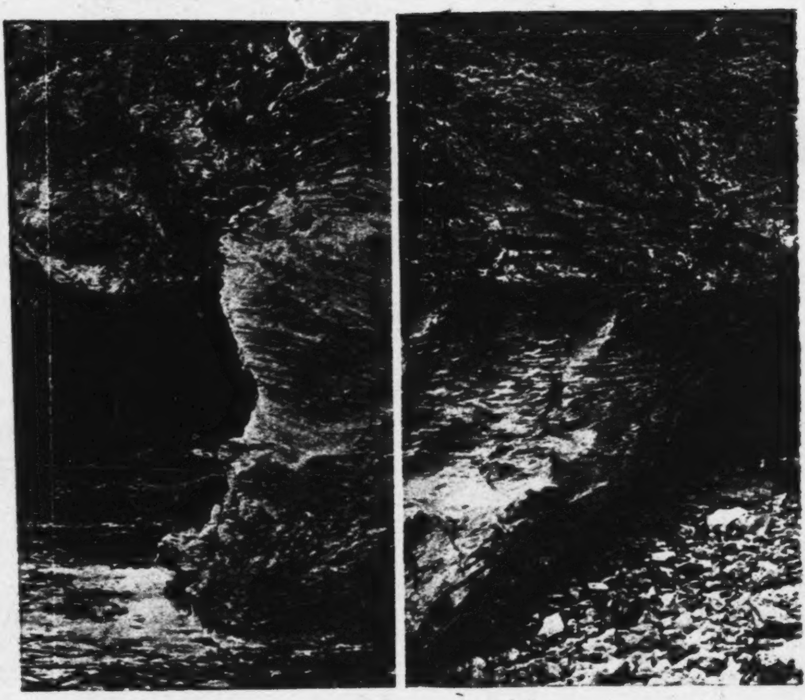


[facing p. 254-A(d)]

133



[facing p. 254-B(a)]



ANA KAI-TANGATA.

Cave on right, site of cannibal feasts during bird rites.

[facing p. 254-B(b)]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 101.

133

[facing p. 254-B(c)]

[254A

FIG. 102.

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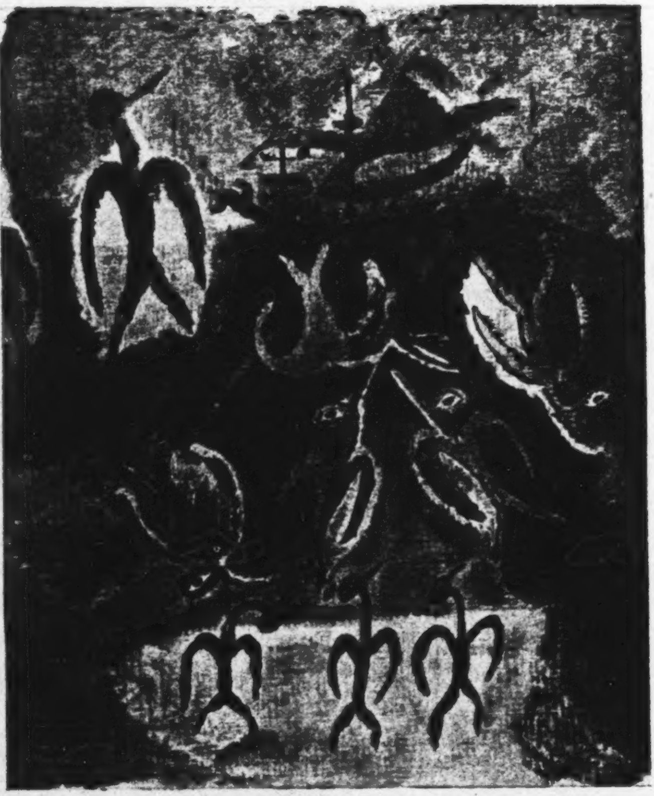

PAINTINGS ON ROOF OF ANA KAI-TANGATA.

Top, a bird superimposed on a European ship.

254(a)]

[facing p. 254 -(C)]

evolved the tablets there are two points worth noticing. Firstly,
211 the Islanders are distinctly clever with their hands and fond of
212 representing forms. Setting aside the large images, the carving
of the small wooden ones is very good, and the accuracy of the
tablet designs is wonderful. Then they have real enjoyment
in reciting categories of words; for example, in recounting folk-
tales, opportunity was always gleefully taken of any mention of
537 feasting to go through the whole of the food products of the is-
land. In the same way, if a hero went from one locality to another,
the name of every place *en route* would be rolled out without any
further object than the mere pleasure of giving a string of names.
This form of recitation appears to affect them æsthetically, and
the mere continuation of sound to be a pleasure. Given, there-
fore, that it was desired to remember lists of words, whether
categories of names or correct forms of prayer, the repetition
would be a labour of love, and to draw figures as aids to recol-
lection would be very natural.

Nevertheless, the signs themselves have no doubt a history, which as such, even apart from interpretation, may prove to be signposts in our search for the origin of this mysterious people.

THE BIRD CULT

Knowledge of the tablets was confined to a few, and formed
796 a comparatively small element of life in the island; the whole
of social existence revolved round the bird cult, and it was the
last of the old order to pass away. The main object of the
cult was to obtain the first egg of a certain migratory sea-bird,
and the rites were connected with the western headland, Rano
Kao. Little has yet been said of this volcano, but, from the
133 scenic point of view, it is the most striking portion of the island.
Its height is 1,300 feet, and it possesses a crater two-thirds of a
mile across, at the bottom of which is a lake largely covered with
weeds and plant-life. On the eastward, or landward face, the
mountain, as already explained, slopes downward with a smooth
and grassy incline, and the other three sides have been worn by
the waves into cliffs over 1,000 feet in height. On the outer-
most side the sea has nearly forced its way into the crater
itself; and the ocean is now divided from the lake at this point
by only a narrow edge, along which it would be possible but

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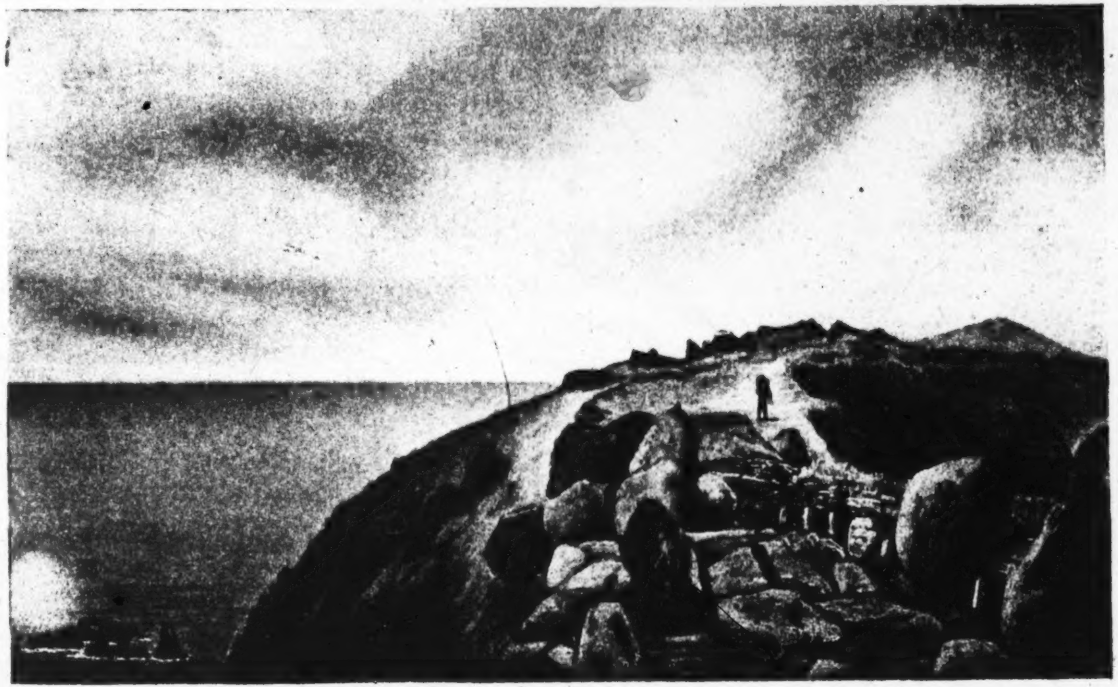
FIG. 103.



ORONGO, END HOUSES AND CARVED ROCKS

[facing p. 255]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OYZ Easter Islanders OYZ

not easy to walk with safety. At some near date, as geological ages reckon, the island will have a magnificent harbour (figs. 100 and 108). Off this part of the coast are three little islets, outlying portions of the original mountain, which have as yet withstood the unceasing blows of the ocean. Their names are Motu Nui, Motu Iti, and Motu Kao-kao, and on them nest the sea-birds which have for unknown centuries played so important a part in the history of the island. On the mainland, immediately opposite these islets, there is on the top of the cliff a deserted stone village; it is known as Orongo, and in it the Islanders awaited the coming of the birds. It consists of nearly fifty dwellings arranged in two rows, both facing the sea, and partly overlapping; the lower row terminates just before the narrowest part of the crater wall is reached. The final houses are built among an outcrop of rocks; they are betwixt two groups of stones, and have in front of them a small natural pavement. The stones nearest the cliff look as if at any moment they might join their brethren in headlong descent to the shore below (fig. 103). Both the upstanding rocks and pavement are covered with carvings; some of them are partly obliterated by time, and can only be seen in a good light, but the ever-recurrent theme is a figure with the body of a man and the head of a bird; portions of the carvings are covered by the houses, and they therefore antedate them. 133 361 346 796

The whole position is marvellous, surpassing the wildest scenes depicted in romance. Immediately at hand are these strange relics of a mysterious past; on one side far beneath is the dark crater lake; on the other, a thousand feet below, swells and breaks the Pacific Ocean, it girdles the islets with a white belt of foam, and extends, in blue unbroken sweep, till it meets the ice-fields of the Antarctic. The all-pervading stillness of the island culminates here in a silence which may be felt, broken only by the cry of the sea-birds as they circle round their lonely habitations. 000

The stone village formed the scene of some of our earliest work during our first residence at the Manager's house; for some weeks, weather permitting, we rode daily up the mountain, an ascent which took about fifty minutes, and spent the day on the top studying the remains, and picking the brains of our native companions. Some of the houses have been destroyed in order 346 796

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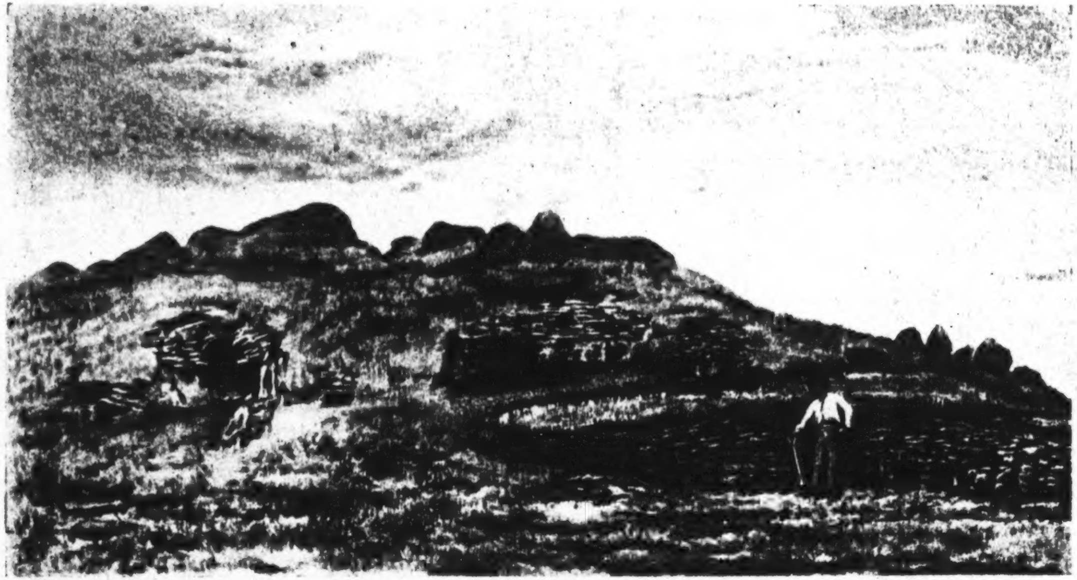
[facing p. 256]

FIG. 104.



CENTRAL PORTION OF ORONGO VILLAGE.

Left, house which contained image; centre, three houses opening on small quadrangle; right, canoe-shaped house with double entrance.

346 796 to obtain the painted slabs within, but most are in fair, and some in perfect, preservation. The form of construction suitable to the low ground has perhaps been tried here and abandoned, for some of the foundation-stones, pierced with the holes to support the superstructure of stick and grass, are built into the existing dwellings. The present buildings (fig. 104) are well adapted to such a wind-swept spot; they are made of stone laminæ, with walls about 6 feet thick; the inside walls are generally lined with vertical slabs, and horizontal slabs form the roof.

The greater number are built at the back into rising ground, and their sides and top are covered with earth; the natives call them not "haré," or houses, but "ana," or caves. Where space permits it, the form is boat-shaped, but some have been adapted to natural contours.[1] The dwellings vary in shape and size, from 52 feet by 6 feet to 8 feet by 4 feet; the height within varies from 4 feet to over 6 feet, but it is the exception to be able to stand upright. In some cases they open out of one another, and not unfrequently there is a hatch between two through which food could be passed. The doorway, with its six foot of passage, is just large enough to admit a man. (Into each of them, armed with ends of candles, we either crawled on hands and knees, or wriggled like serpents, according to our respective heights.) The slabs lining the wall, which are just opposite the doorway, and thus obtain a little light, are frequently painted; [532] some of them have bird and others native designs, but perhaps the most popular is a European ship, sometimes in full sail, and once with a sailor aloft in a red shirt (fig. 105). Inside the [352 513] houses we found the flat, sea-worn boulders which are used as pillows and often incised with rough designs; there were also a few obsidian spear heads, or mataa, and once or twice sphagnum from the crater, which was used for caulking boats, and also as [501 505] a sponge to retain fresh water when at sea. Outside many of the doors are small stone-lined holes, which we cleared out and examined. They measure roughly rather under 2 feet across by some 15 inches in depth. Our guides first told us that they were "ovens," but, as no ash was found, it seems probable that their second thoughts were right, and they were used to contain stores.

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[1] An accurate large scale plan of the village was made by Lieutenant D. R. Ritchie, R.N., and every house was measured and described by the Expedition.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

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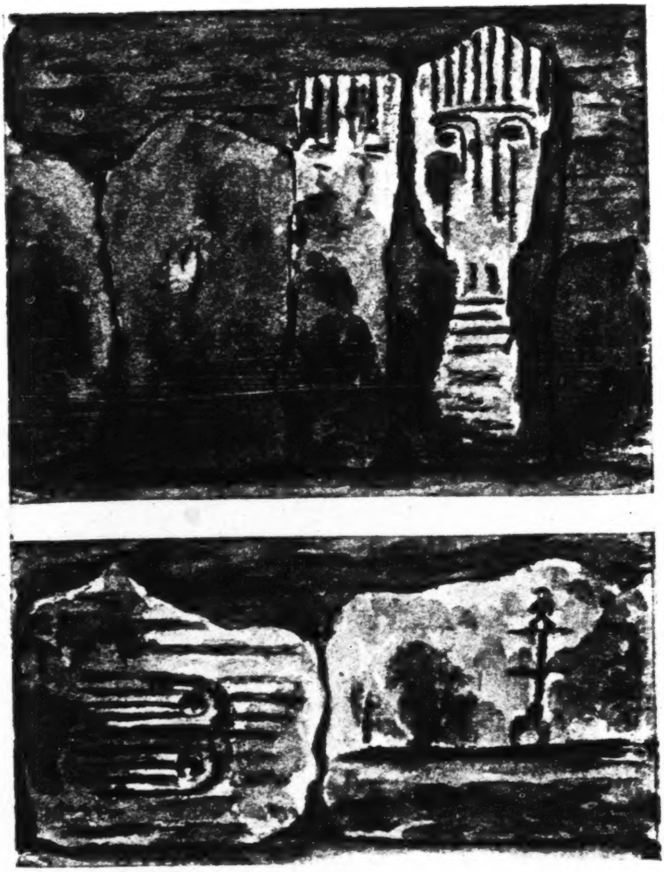
532

FIG. 105.



I.

II.

PAINTED SLABS FROM HOUSES AT ORONGO.

I. Two pictorial representations of ao.
II. A face adorned with paint. A European ship.
[Height of slabs, 3 ft. to 3 ft. 6 in.]

[Facing p. 257]

The groups of dwellings have various names, and are asso- 346
ciated with the particular clans, who, it is said, built them.
One house, which stands near the centre of the village, Taura- 796
renga by name, is particularly interesting as having been the
dwelling of the statue Hoa-haka-nanaia, roughly to be translated [552]
as "Breaking wave," now resident under the portico of the
British Museum (fig. 31). Lying about near by were two large
stones, which had originally served as foundations for the
thatched type of dwelling, but had apparently been converted
into doorposts for the house of the image; on one of them a
face had been roughly carved (fig. 107). The statue is not of 346
Raraku stone, and it will be realised how entirely exceptional it is 532
to find a statue under cover and in such a position. The back 796
and face were painted white, with the "tracings" in red. The
bottom contracts, and was embedded in the earth, though a stone
suspiciously like a pedestal is built into a near wall. The
house had to be broken down in order to get the figure out.
According to the account of the missionaries, three hundred
sailors and two hundred Kanakas were required to convey
it down the mountain to H.M.S. *Topaze* in Cook's Bay. The
memory of the incident is fast fading, but our friend Viriamo
repeated in a quavering treble the song of the sailors as they
hauled down their load.[1] The figure is some eight feet high and
weighs about four tons.

Day by day, as we worked, we gazed down on the islets. The 800
outermost, which, as its name Motu Nui signifies, is also the largest, is more particularly connected with the bird story, which we were gradually beginning to grasp, and at last the call to visit it could no longer be resisted (fig. 109). It was not an easy matter, for *Mana* was away; the boats of the natives left a good deal to be desired in the way of seaworthiness, and it was only possible to make the attempt on a fine day. Finally, on arrival at the island, it required not a little agility to jump on to a ledge of rocks at the second the boat rose on the crest of the waves, before it again sank on a boiling and surging sea till the heads of the crew were many feet below the landing-place. We

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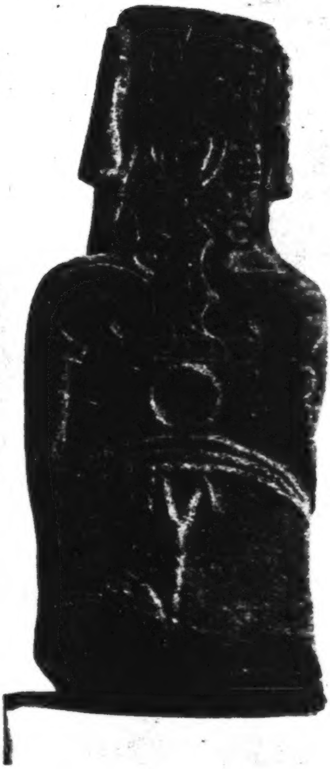
[1] Recollection is naturally clearer of the removal of the statue now at Washington, and particularly of the excellent food given to the natives who assisted. The figure is reported to have been taken from Ahu Apépé, an inland terrace not far from Rano Raraku, and been dragged down to the ship as she lay in La Pérouse Bay.

FIG. 106.



W. A. M. & Co.] [*Brit. Mus.*

BACK OF STATUE FROM ORONGO,

Showing raised ring and girdle, also incised figures of bird-man, ao, and Ko-Mari.
(For front of statue, see fig. 31.)

[facing p. 258]

000 managed, however, between us to get there three times in all. Once, when I was there without S., there was an anxious moment on re-embarking. No one quite knew what happened. Some of the crew said that the gunwale of the boat, as she rose on a wave, caught under an overhanging shelf of rock, others were of the opinion that the sudden weight of the last man, who at that moment leapt into the boat, upset her balance; anyway, this tale was very nearly never written. Once landed on the island, the surface is comparatively level and presents no difficulties; it is about five acres in extent, the greater part is covered with grass, and in every niche and cranny of the rock are sea-birds' nests. [124] By a large bribe of tobacco one of the most active old men was induced to accompany us, and to point out the sites of interest. Later, we followed up the story at Raraku, and so little by little at many times, in divers places, and from various people was gathered the story of the bird cult which follows.

796 [136] Not many sea-birds frequent this part of the Pacific, but on Motu Nui some seven species find an abiding-place. Some stay for the whole year, some come for the winter, and yet others for the summer. Among the last is a kind known to the natives as manu-tara[1]; it arrives in September, the spring of the southern hemisphere. The great object of life in Easter was to be the first to obtain one of the newly laid eggs of this bird. It was too solemn a matter for there to be any general scramble. Only those who belonged to the clan in the ascendancy for the time being could enter on the quest. Sometimes one group would keep it in their hands for years, or they might pass it on to a friendly clan. This selection gave rise, as might be expected, to burnings of hearts; the matter might be, and probably often was, settled by war. One year the Marama were inspired with jealousy because the Miru had chosen the Ngaure as their successors, and burnt down the house of Ngaara. This was, perhaps, the beginning of the fray when the old Ariki was carried off captive.

The fortunate clan, or clans, for sometimes several combined, left nothing to chance; in fact, as soon as one year's egg had been found, the incoming party made sure of their right of way by taking up their abode at the foot of Rano Kao—namely, at

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[1] Sooty Tern.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

FIG. 107.

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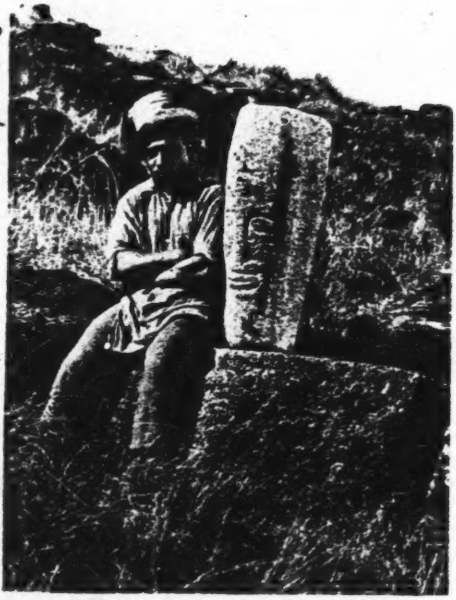

CARVED DOOR-POST, ORONGO.

[facing p. 259]

Mataveri. Here there were a number of the large huts with 796
stone foundations; in these they resided, with their wives and
families. One of our old gentlemen friends first saw the light
in a Mataveri dwelling, when his people were in residence, or, to
use the proper phraseology, when his clan were "the Ao."[1]
This name "ao" is also given to a large paddle, as much as
6 feet in length, used principally, if not exclusively, in connection 293
with bird rites and dancing at Mataveri. In some
specimens a face is fully depicted on the handle; in others the 796
features have degenerated to a raised line merely indicating the
eyebrows and nose. There are pictures of it on slabs in the
Orongo houses, in which the face is adorned with vertical stripes
of red and white after the native manner, as described by the
early voyagers (figs. 105 and 118).

Naturally the months passed at Mataveri were occupied 796
by the residents in feasting as well as in dancing, and equally 266
naturally the victims were human. It was to grace one of these
gatherings, when the Ureohei were the Ao, that the mother
of Hotu, the Miru, was slain in a way which he considered outraged
the decencies of life, and it was in revenge for another
Mataveri victim that the last statues were thrown down.
It is told that the destined provender for one meal evaded that
fate by hiding in the extreme end of a hut, which was so long
and dark that she was never found. Some of these repasts took
place in a cave in the sea-cliff near at hand. Here the ocean has
made great caverns in a wall of lava, into which the waves surge
and break with booming noise and dashing spray. The recess
which formed the banqueting-hall is just above high-water
mark, and is known as "Ana Kai-tangata," or Eat-man Cave
(fig. 102). The roof is adorned with pictures of birds in red and
white; one of these birds is drawn over a sketch of a European
ship, showing that they are not of very ancient date (fig. 103).

When July approached, the company, or some of them, wound 796
their way up the western side of the hill, along the ever-narrowing
summit to the village of Orongo; the path can just be
traced in certain lights, and is known as the "Road of the Ao."
They spent their time while awaiting the birds in dancing each [535]
day in front of the houses; food was brought up by the women,
of whom Viriamo was one.

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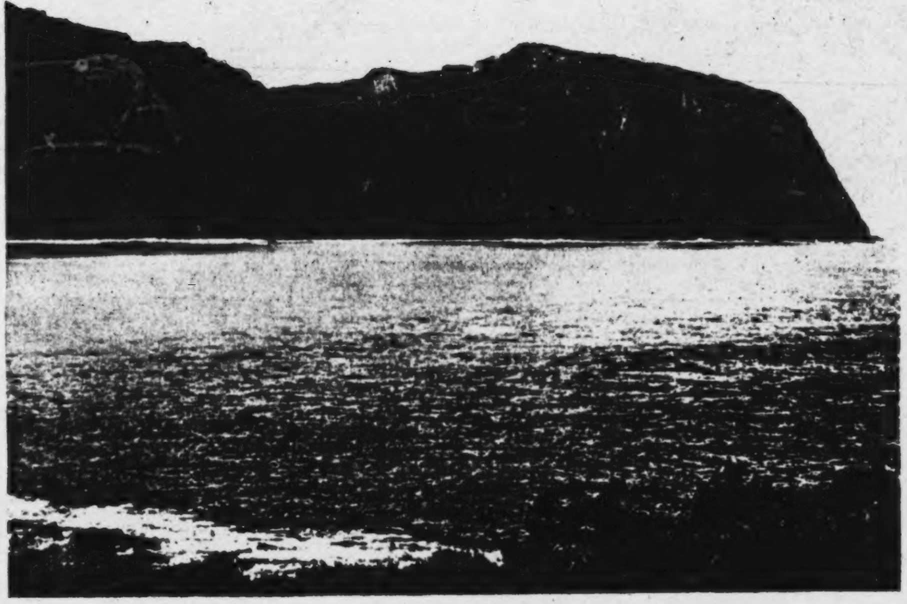
[1] The men of the ascendant clan are also often spoken of as the Mata-tōa, or warriors, the other clans being the Mata-kio, or servants.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OYZ Easter Islanders OYZ

FIG. 108.



RANO KAO FROM MOTU NUI

[facing p. 260]

796 of whom Viriamo was one. The group of houses at the end among the carved rocks was taboo during the festival, for they
[784] were inhabited by the rongo-rongo men, the western half being apportioned to the experts from Hotu Iti, the eastern to those from Kotuu. "They chanted all day; they stopped an hour to eat, that was all." They came at the command of Ngaara, but it is noteworthy that he himself never appeared at Orongo, though he sometimes paid a friendly call at Mataveri.

A short way down the cliff immediately below Orongo is a cave known as "Haka-rongo-manu," or "listening for the birds"; here men kept watch day and night for news from the islet below.

796 The privilege of obtaining the first egg was a matter of competition between members of the Ao, but the right to be one of
787 the competitors was secured only by supernatural means. An "ivi-atua," a divinely gifted individual, of the kind who had
[791] the gift of prophecy, dreamed that a certain man was favoured by the gods, so that if he entered for the race he would be a winner, or, in technical parlance, become a bird-man, or "tangata-manu." The victor, on being successful, was ordered to
[553] take a new name, which formed part of the revelation, and this bird-name was given to the year in which victory was achieved,
[805] thus forming an easily remembered system of chronology. The nomination might be taken up at once or not for many years; if not used by the original nominee, it might descend to his son or grandson. If a man did not win, he might try again, or say that "the ivi-atua was a liar," and retire from the contest. Women were never nominated, but the ivi-atua might be male or female, and, needless to say, was rewarded with presents of food. There
796 were four "gods" connected with the eggs—Hawa-tuu-také-také, who was "chief of the eggs," and Maké-maké, both of whom
776 were males; there were also two females, Vie Hoa, the wife of Hawa, and Vie Kenatea. Each of these four had a servant, whose names were given, and who were also supernatural beings. Those going to take the eggs recited the names of the gods before meat, inviting them to partake.

796 The actual competitors were men of importance, and spent their time with the remainder of the Ao in the stone houses of the village of Orongo; they selected servants to represent them and await the coming of the birds in less comfortable quarters in the islet below. These men, who were known as

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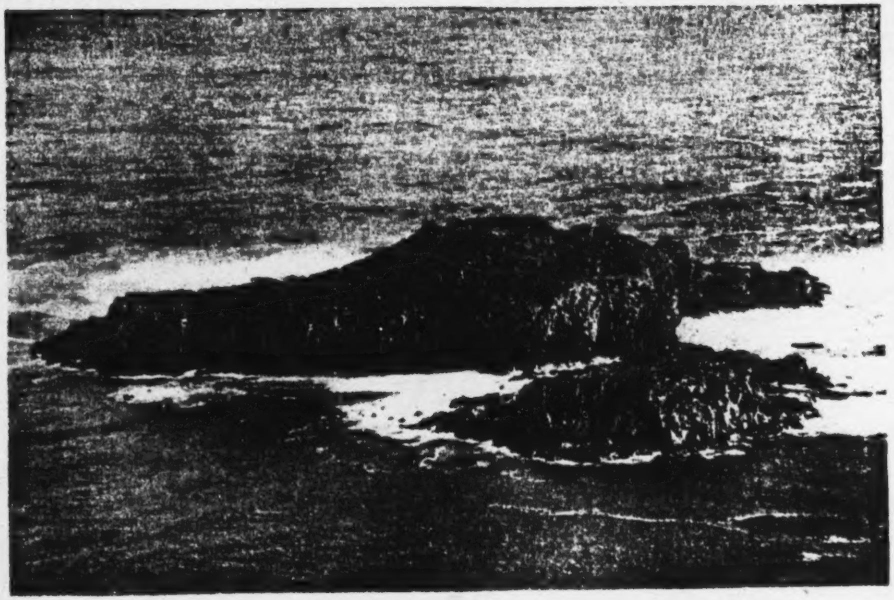
FIG. 109.



MOTU NUI AND MOTU ITI.

261]

[facing p. 261]

"hopu," went to the islet when the Ao went up to Orongo, or 796
possibly rather later. Each made up his provisions into a
"pora," or securely bound bundle of reeds; he then swam on [481
the top of the packet, holding it with one arm and propelling 501]
himself with the remaining arm and both legs. An incantation, which was recited to us, was said by him before starting. In one instance, the ivi-atua, at the same time that he gave the
nomination, prophesied that the year that it was taken up a [787]
man should be eaten by a large fish. The original recipient never availed himself of it, but on his death-bed told his son of the prophecy. The son, Kilimuti, undeterred by it, entered for the race and sent two men to the islet; one of them started to swim there with his pora, but was never heard of again, and it was naturally said that the prophecy had been fulfilled. Kilimuti wasted no regret over the misfortune, obtained another servant, and secured the egg; he died while the Expedition was on the island.

The hopu lived together in a large cave of which the entrance is nearly concealed by grass. The inside, however, is light and airy; it measures 19 feet by 13, with a height of over 5 feet, and conspicuous among other carvings in the centre of the wall is a large ao more than 7 feet in length. A line dividing the islet between Kotuu and Hotu Iti passed through the centre of the cave, and also through another cave nearer the edge of the islet; in this latter there was at one time a statue about 2 feet high known as Titahanga-o-te-henua, or The Boundary
of the Land.[1] As bad weather might prevent fresh consignments [251]
of food during the weeks of waiting, the men carefully dried on the rocks the skins of the bananas and potatoes which they had brought with them, to be consumed in case of necessity. It was added with a touch appreciated by those acquainted with Easter Island, that, if the man who thus practised foresight was not careful, others who had no food would steal it when he was not looking.

The approach of the manu-tara can be heard for miles, for 796
their cry is their marked peculiarity, and the noise during nesting 825
is said to be deafening; one incised drawing of the bird shows

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[1] This statue was removed to the mainland shortly before our arrival, and we were able to procure it in exchange for one of the yacht blankets. It is now at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (fig. 111).

796 825 it with open beak, from which a series of lines spreads out fanwise, obviously representing the volume of sound; names in imitation of these sounds were given to children, such as "Piruru," "Wero-wero," "Ka-ara-ara." [551] It is worth noting that the coming of the tara inaugurates the deep-sea fishing season; [226 262] till their arrival all fish living in twenty or thirty fathoms were considered poisonous. The birds on first alighting tarried only a short time; immediately on their departure the hopu rushed out to find the egg, or, according to another account, the rushing out of the hopu frightened away the birds. 796 The gods intervened in the hunt, so that the man who was not destined to win went past the egg even when it lay right in his path. The first finder rushed up to the highest point of the islet, calling to his employer by his new name, "Shave your head, you have got the egg." The cry was taken up by the watchers in the cave on the mainland, and the fortunate victor, beside himself with joy, proceeded [302] to shave his head and paint it red, while the losers showed their grief by cutting themselves with mataa.

The defeated hopu started at once to swim from the [262] island to the shore, while the winner, who was obliged to fast while the egg was in his possession, put it in a little basket, and, going down to the landing-rock, dipped it into the sea. One meaning of the word hopu is "wash." He then tied the basket round his forehead and was able to swim quickly, as the gods were with him. At this stage sometimes accidents occurred, for if the sea was rough, an unlucky swimmer might be dashed on the rocks and killed. In one instance, it was said, only one man escaped with his life, owing, as he reported, to his having been warned by Maké-maké not to make the attempt. When the hopu arrived on the mainland, he handed over the egg to his employer, and a tangata-rongo-rongo tied round the arm which had taken it a fragment of red tapa and also a piece of the tree known as "ngau-ngau," reciting meanwhile the appropriate [202] words. The finding was announced by a fire being lit on the landward side of the summit of Rano Kao on one of two sites, according to whether the Ao came from the west or east side of the island.

796 532 It will be remembered that on the rocks which terminate the settlement of Orongo the most numerous of the carvings is the figure of a man with the head of a bird; it is in a crouching

attitude with the hands held up, and is carved at every size and 796
angle according to the surface of the rock (fig. 110). It can still 532
be counted one hundred and eleven times, and many specimens
must have disappeared: all knowledge of its meaning is lost.
The figure may have represented one of the egg gods, but it
seems more probable that each one was a memorial to a bird-man;
and this presumption is strengthened by the fact that in
at least three of the carvings the hand is holding an egg (fig. 112).
The history of another figure, a small design which is also very
frequent, still survives and corroborates this by analogy; within
living memory it was the custom for women of the island to
come up here and be immortalised by having one of these small
figures ("Ko Mari") cut on the rock by a professional expert.
We know, therefore, that conventional forms were used as
memorials of certain definite persons.[1]

The bird-man, having obtained the egg, took it in his hand 796
palm upwards, resting it on a piece of tapa, and danced with a
rejoicing company down the slope of Rano Kao and along the
south coast, a procedure which is known as "haka epa," or
"make shelf," from the position of the hand with regard to the
egg. If, however, the winner belonged to the western clans, he
generally went to Anakena for the next stage, very possibly
because, as was explained, he was afraid to go to Hotu Iti; some
victors also went to special houses in their own district, otherwise
the company went along the southern shore till they reached
Rano Raraku.

Amongst the statues standing on its exterior slope, there is
shown at the south-west corner the foundations of a house (no. 7,
fig. 60). This is the point which would first be approached
from the southern coast, and here the bird-man remained for a [784]
year, five months of which were spent in strict taboo. The egg,
which was still kept on tapa, was hung up inside the house and
blown on the third day, a morsel of tapa being put inside.
The victor did not wash, and spent his time in "sleeping all day, [243]
only coming out to sit in the shade." His correct head-dress
was a crown made of human hair; it was known as "hau oho,"

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[1] The figures of the bird-man, also of the ao and Ko Mari, are all roughly carved on the back of the Orongo statue (fig. 106). They appear, like those on the Raraku image, to be later workmanship than the raised ring and girdle. Permission to inspect can be obtained in the hall of the British Museum; unfortunately the light in the portico is bad.

796 and if it was not worn the aku-aku would be angry. The house
[293] was divided into two, the other half being occupied by a man
who was called an ivi-atua, but was of an inferior type to the
one gifted with prophecy, and apparently merely a poor relation
[784] of the hero; there were two cooking-places, as even he might
not share that of the bird-man. Food was brought as gifts,
especially the first sugar-cane, and these offerings seem to have
[431] been the sole practical advantage of victory; those who did
not contribute were apt to have their houses burnt. The bird-
688 man's wife came to Raraku, but dwelt apart, as for the first five
834 months she could not enter her husband's house, nor he hers, on
pain of death. A few yards below the bird-man's house is the ahu alluded to on p. 191 (fig. 60); it consists merely of a low rough wall built into the mountain, the ground above it being levelled and paved. It was reserved for the burial of bird-men; they were the uncanny persons whose ghosts might do unpleasant things—they were safer hidden under stones. The name Orohié is given to the whole of this corner of the mountain, with its houses, its ahu, and its statues. To this point the figures led which were round the base of the hill. If they were re-erected, they would stand with their backs not to the mountain, but to Orohié.[1] As the bird-man gazed lazily forth from the shade of his house, above him were the quarries with their unfinished work, below him were the bones of his dead predecessors, while on every hand giant images stood for ever in stolid calm. It is difficult to escape from the question, Were the statues on the mountain those of bird-men?

The hopu also retired into private life; if he were of the Ao, he
could come to Orohié, but he might, if he wished, reside in his
[784] own house, which was in that case divided by a partition through
which food was passed; it might not be eaten with his right
hand, as that had taken the egg. His wife and children were
also kept in seclusion and forbidden to associate with others.

The new Ao had meanwhile taken up their abode at Mataveri. From here a few weeks after their arrival they went formally to Motu Nui to obtain the young manu-tara, known from their cry as "piu." After the brief visit of the birds when the first egg was laid, they absented themselves from the islet for a period varyingly reported as from three days to a month. On their

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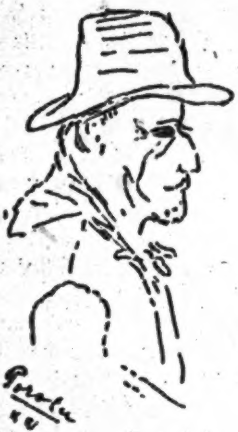
[1] Nos. 1, 2, and 3, fig. 60, form part of this series. See also fig. 74.

return they laid plentifully, and, as soon as the nestlings were 796
hatched, the men of the celebrating clan carried them to the
mainland, swimming with them in baskets bound round the
forehead after the manner of the first egg. They were then
taken in procession round the island, or, according to another
account, only as far as Orohié. It was not until the piu
had been obtained that it was permissible to eat the eggs, and [262]
they were then consumed by the subservient clans only, not by
the Ao. The first two or three eggs, it was explained, were
"given to God"; to eat them would prove fatal. Some of the
young manu tara were kept in confinement till they were full [231]
grown, when a piece of red tape was tied round the wing and
leg, and they were told, "Kaho ki te hiva," "Go to the world
outside." There was no objection to eating the young birds. The tara departed from Motu Nui about March, but a few stragglers remained; we saw one bird and obtained eggs at the beginning of July, but the natives failed to get any for us in August. When in the following spring the new bird-man had achieved his egg, he brought it to Orohié and was given the old one, which he buried in a gourd in a cranny of Rano Raraku; sometimes, however, it was thrown into the sea, or kept and buried with its original owner. The new man then took the place of his predecessor, who returned to ordinary life.

The last year that the Ao went to Orongo, which is known 796
as "Rokunga," appears to have been 1866 or 1867. The names 177
of twelve subsequent years are given, during which the competition for the egg continued, and it was still taken to be interred at Raraku. The cult thus survived in a mutilated form the conversion of the island to Christianity, which was completed in 1868; it is said that once the missionaries saw the Ao dancing with the egg outside their door in Hanga Roa and "told the people it was the Devil." It must have been celebrated even after the assembly of the remains of the clans into one place, which occurred about the same time, but it was finally crushed by the secular exploiters of the island, whose house at Mataveri, that of the present manager, rests on the foundation-stones of the cannibal habitation (fig. 25). The cult admittedly degenerated in later years. A new practice arose of having more than one bird-man, with other innovations. The request to be given the names of as many bird-years as could be remembered

796 met with an almost embarrassing response, eighty-six being
177 quoted straight away; some of these may be the official names of bird-men and not represent a year, but they probably do so in most cases; chronological sequence was achieved with fair certainty for eleven years prior to the final celebration at Orongo. In addition to the bird-name, the names of both winner and hopu were ascertained, with those of their respective clans.



[124] FIG. 113. Porotu acted as a hopu. He refused to be photographed, and the sketch was surreptitiously made, whilst obtaining the account of his official experiences. He also assisted in carrying the remains of Ko Tori (p. 225).

TAKÉ AND MANU

881 Two other ceremonies were mentioned in connection with Orongo and Motu Nui, but to obtain detailed information was very difficult. It finally transpired that of "také" no first-hand knowledge existed, as the rites had been abandoned thirty years before the coming of the missionaries. All that can be safely said is that those concerned went into retreat on Motu Nui, living, it was stated, in the cave where the hopu awaited the birds; the period was generally given as three months. A vigorous discussion took place on the subject between Viriamo and Jotefa, the oldest man in the village, seated on a log in the garden of the old lady. She was positive, in agreement with other authorities, that také was for children—"the boys and girls went in a canoe to the island"; he firmly adhered to the statement that his father
[212] went for také, after he, the son, was born. Tomenika stated that

FIG. 114.

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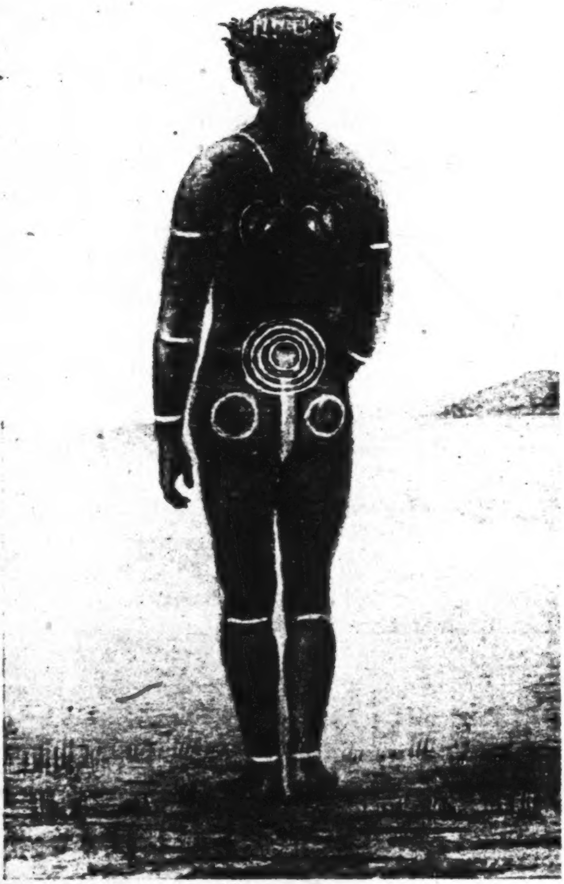

BIRD-CHILD (*POKI-MANU*).

Ceremonial ornamentation, from a drawing made by natives.

[facing p. 267]

take formed the subject of one of the tablets, and drew one of its 881 figures, which bears no resemblance to any other known symbol. [212]

The details of manu were more satisfactory. It was known as "te manu mo te poki," or, "the bird for the child," and the child so initiated became a "poki-manu," or "bird-child." It could not be found that any special benefit resulted from it, but a child whose parents had not performed the ceremony, and whose love affairs, for instance, went wrong, might even kill his father in revenge for the omission. An expert, known as "tan- 593 gata-tapa-manu," (the man who, as Dr. Marett would tell us, 688] "knew the right things to say," was called in and given a hen's egg—on this last point much stress was laid; he was at the same time told the child's name, which was subsequently inserted in the ritual. The child was shaved, decorated with white bands, and hung round with coconuts, or, as these were not readily obtainable in Easter Island, with pieces of wood carved to represent them called "tahonga." A number of children, each with an expert, then went up to Orongo; the correct month was December, and the Ao were therefore below at Mataveri. Jotefa, on whose final account I principally rely, stated that he and nine other children, with their parents, and ten tangata-tapa-manu, went to Orongo from his home on the north coast, a distance of some eleven miles; they took with them ten chickens. The party danced in front of all the houses, went to the carved [535] rocks at the end, and, coming back, stood in a semicircle in front of the door of Taura-renga, the house of the statue, the experts being behind and all singing; no offering was made to the image. Another authority stated that the parents and children went on the roof of the house, the experts being below, and the parents gave chickens to the men. Jotefa's party returned to their home, had a feast, and gave more food to the professionals. The tangata-tapa-manu subsequently repeated the ritual at any koro which were being held in the island, the object apparently being to make public the child's initiation.

If, by reason of the state of the island, it was not possible to go to Orongo, the ceremony could take place at any of the big ahu with images. Viriamo, whose home, as will be remembered, was near Raraku, said with much pride that she was a "poki-manu"; she and her three younger sisters had been taken at the same time to the ahu of Orohié. Both parents

841 went, and "the mother took two chickens, one in each hand,
and the mother and children stood upright and the "maori sang";
they did not go to Orongo because there was war. A drawing
was made for us by Juan and the old men of the poki-manu in
ceremonial attire (fig. 114); it was particularly interesting to
[302] find, when it was handed in, that circles of white pigment were
made on the child's back, and also on each buttock, in a way
which recalls the adornment of the Anakena image (fig. 65).

WOODEN CARVINGS

532 The stone sculpture of Easter Island belongs to an era which
is now forgotten; there are a number of wooden carvings which,
322 whatever their original age, are connected with a recent past,
and even in a limited sense with the present.

The most important of these works, the tablets, have
already been dealt with, and mention has been made of the
lizard figures, they have the head of that animal on a human
body (fig. 117). The "ao," the large dancing-paddle, and
the smaller one, the "rapa," are of much the same
character, though used on different occasions (figs. 116 (*a*), 118).
The "ua" is a club, on the handle of which are two
heads back to back; these clubs were dignified with individual
301 names. The "paoa" was a wooden sword. There were also
bird ornaments carved in wood which were worn on the last
322 day of the koro and by Ngaara. The "rei-miro" is a breast
532 ornament of a crescent shape, with a face at one or both ends;
it is found depicted on the Orongo rocks and frequently on the
tablets. It was especially a woman's decoration, but a number
of small ones were said to have been worn by Ngaara. The
specimen in the British Museum is embellished with glyphs, of
which no account was forthcoming (fig. 115).

Wooden objects which are peculiarly interesting are the
322 small male and female figures some twenty to thirty inches
532 in height; the natives term them "moai," adding the word
"miro," or wood (fig. 119). In a certain number of these the
ribs are very prominent, giving the effect of emaciation; they are
called "moai kava-kava," or the statues with ribs. It has been
suggested that this represents the condition in which the first
[173] inhabitants reached the island, but such an explanation is

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strenuously denied by the present people, who assert that their ancestors arrived with plenty of food. The figures have long ears, like the statues in stone, and a marked feature is their little goatee beards. These beards are found in three or four statues at Raraku, in a head in relief on Motu Nui, and one is indicated in fig. 31. But the most striking link with the stone figures is the back, where there is a ring similar to that found on the larger statues: the girdle and M-like design below it also appear in varying degree (fig. 120). A comparative study of the backs of the wooden images has suggested the idea[1] that this M-like marking in stone may be simply the last stage of an evolution in design, which originally showed the lines of the lower portion of the back and thigh.[2] It would be satisfactory if, in the same way, the triple belt could be connected with the ribs and the ring with the vertebræ, but for this the evidence is less conclusive, although the ribs of the body with the lizard head closely approach the conventional. It must be remembered that the figures are nude, and that therefore these designs can scarcely represent any form of dress. There is a pronounced excrescence on the buttocks in the wooden figures, which is also a mystery, but which recalls the way in which the rings on the image found at Anakena (fig. 65) and those on the poki-manu (fig. 114) emphasise the same part of the anatomy. The heads are embellished with ornaments, some of which are bird designs (fig. 121). These figures were worn by men only, and hung round the neck on important occasions; they were parts of the festival dress at Mataveri and at the koro.

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The tradition of the origin of the wooden images is one of the best known and uniformly narrated, but obviously bears the marks of endeavouring to explain facts whose genesis has been forgotten. It runs thus: Tuukoihu, an ariki, and one of the first immigrants, was a clever man or "tangata-maori"; he had two houses, one at Ahu Tepeu on the west side and one at Hanga Hahavé on the south coast—the foundations of both are shown. One night, when he was sleeping at the latter dwelling, two female aku-aku appeared to him, by name Papa Ahiro and Papa

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[1] We owe this suggestion to Captain T. A. Joyce.

[2] Those unacquainted with the manner in which the drawing of a natural object can, through constant repetition, lose all resemblance to it and become purely conventional are referred to *Evolution in Art*, by Dr. A. C. Haddon.

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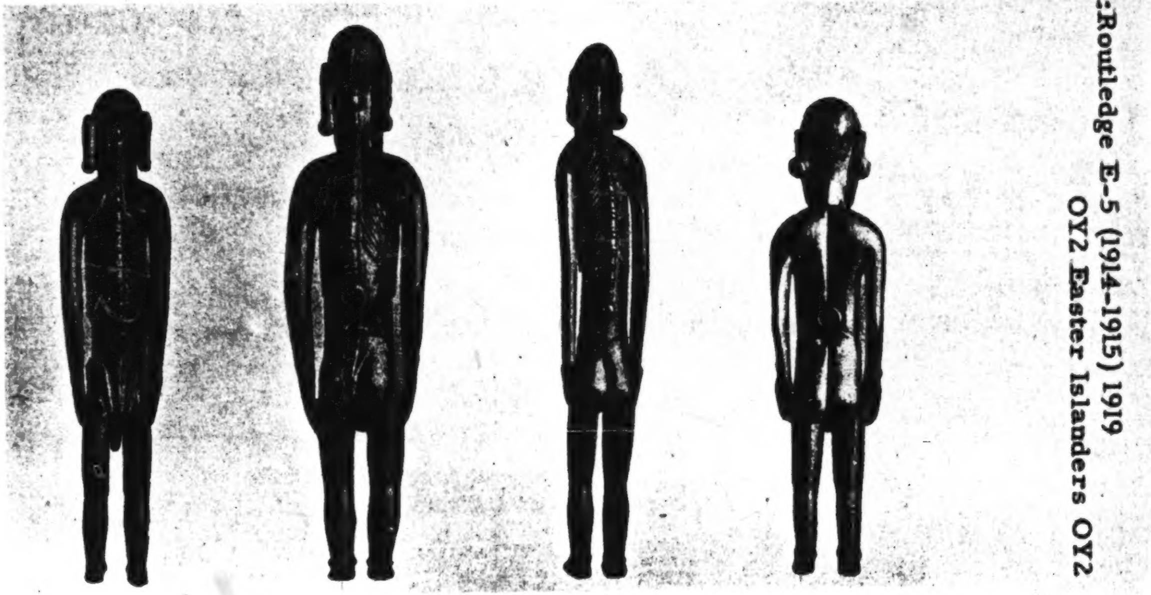
FIG. 120.

[facing p. 270]



[Brit. Mus.

BACKS OF WOODEN IMAGES.

Showing resemblance to stone figures and possible evolution of conventional design from natural lines of figure.

Akirani.[1] When he awoke he took the wood called toro-miro, 773 and carved two figures with faces, arms, and legs, just as he had seen the aku-aku. When he had finished the work, he went over to Hanga Roa to fish. He slept there, and returned at daybreak, going back by the quarry of the stone hats. Two male aku-aku, by name Ko Hitirau and Ko Nuku-te-mangoa, were sleeping by the way, but were aroused on his approach by two more aku-aku, whose names are given, who told them that there was a man coming who would notice that their ribs were exceedingly "bad." The two sleepers awoke, saw Tuukoihu, and asked him, "Have you seen anything?" He discreetly replied "nothing," and they disappeared. They again met him on the road and put the same question, to which he gave the same answer. When he got to his house, he made two statues with ribs to represent the apparitions. After dark they prowled round the house, listening, with their hands up to their ears, to hear if he gossiped about what he had seen, intending if he did so to kill him. The Ariki, however, held his tongue. Later he went to his other home; there he took the wooden moai, both male and female, and made them walk. The house bears the lengthy name of "The House of the Walking Moai of Tuukoihu, the Ariki," and is the large one whose measurements were given on p. 216. Tuukoihu once lent a moai-miro to a man, whose house took fire while it was in his possession. The Ariki, on hearing of the disaster, told the image to fly away, which it promptly did, and was subsequently found in the neighbourhood unharmed.

Wooden figures are said to have been made in a considerable 322 variety of forms, some of them being in a sitting position, others 532 with hands crossed, etc.; names were bestowed on them—twenty-one such were repeated to us. It was not found possible to ascertain exactly what they are all intended to portray, the information being somewhat confused and contradictory, but on the whole the female figures and those with ribs seem to have been considered to be supernatural beings; they are generally called aku-aku, and sometimes atua, while the others represent

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[1] The term "papa" is also applied to any flat, horizontal surface of fused igneous rock. The double use seems to be explained by connecting it with the facts that in Hawaii, Papa is the name of the female progenitor of the race (or at least of a line of chiefs), while in the Marquesas and Hervey Islands Papa is the earth personified, the Great Mother.—See *A Brief History of the Hawaiian People*, Alexander, p. 20.

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men. It appears probable that they are portraits, or memorial figures, of which the older may have attained to deification: this is confirmed by the fact that there is one such figure at the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford, with short ears, which is said to have been made to represent Captain Cook.

When our friend Kapiera was a boy, there were about ten experts in the island, who made wooden articles of various descriptions, including the images, of whom three at least were alive in our time. Te Haha, who was one of the old workmen, could still be seen sitting in his garden engaged in carving moai miro. We have, therefore, a craft existing in modern days which can be traced back to pre-Christian culture, and which has strong affinities with the prehistoric stone figures. There is, of course, no sentiment connected with the figures of to-day; they are roughly done, and merely for sale. The trade is extended to copies of stone images which are bought by unsuspecting visitors, with circumstantial tales as to their history or discovery which would deceive the very elect. The statues on the ahu near the village, which are made of stone from Raraku, have had pieces cut off them to manufacture into these articles. One Kanaka had in our day a still more brilliant idea which saved him all trouble, he sold a fragment of this rock at a high price to a passing vessel as the "last morsel of image stone to be found in the island." Local opinion regarding the intelligence of the visitors is not high. One man brought to us a wooden figure for sale which he said was "very old." "Indeed," remarked my husband, "it has grown up quickly; it was a new-born infant when I saw it being carved in the village a few weeks ago." "Ah," said the proud possessor, slightly disappointed, but nursing his creation like a child and stroking it affectionately, "he very fine, muy antiqua, I keep him for ships; capitano man-o-wari, all same damn fool."

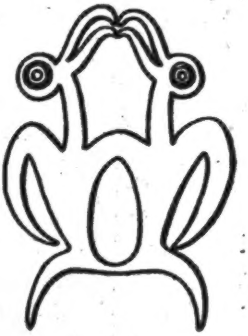

FIG. 121.—BIRD DESIGN FROM HEAD OF WOODEN IMAGE. (*Brit. Mus.*)